BRENTANO'S CONTEMPORARY DRAMA SERIES

CASANOVA

LORENZO de AZERTIS

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CASANOVA

A PLAY IN THREE ACTS

BY

LORENZO DE AZERTIS

Translated by
SIDNEY HOWARD

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"CASANOVA" was first produced by A. H. Woods and Gilbert Miller at The Empire Theater, New York, on September 26, 1923, with the following cast:

PROLOGUE

"THE RETURN FROM THE CARNIVAL"

COLUMBINE.....*Beatrice Belreva*
A GUITAR PLAYER.....*Dorsha*
PULCINELLA.....*George Royle*
BATTISTA, his page.....*Herbert James*
A FAT MAN.....*Harry Fielding*
FIRST HARLEQUIN.....*Lora Vinci*
SECOND HARLEQUIN.....*Desha*
THIRD HARLEQUIN.....*Alice Wynne*
FOURTH HARLEQUIN.....*Renée Wilde*
FIRST MASKED WOMAN.....*Dinarzade*
SECOND MASKED WOMAN....*Marguerite Denys*
THIRD MASKED WOMAN.....*Valentina Sanina*
FOURTH MASKED WOMAN.....*Janet Justice*
FIFTH MASKED WOMAN.....*Tamiris*
SIXTH MASKED WOMAN.....*Nellie Savage*

CHARACTERS OF THE PLAY

ALFANI-CELLI.....*Philip Wood*
MANZONI.....*B. N. Lewin*
A WAITER.....*Walter Soderling*
A GAMBLER.....*William Marr*
GIULIETTA ..... *Dinarzade*
CAPTAIN MICHAEL ECHEDY...*Mario Majeroni*
HENRIETTE.....*Katharine Cornell*
GIACOMO CASANOVA, Chevalier de Seingalt
Lowell Sherman
A LIEUTENANT OF ROMAN ARCHERS
Ralph Belmont
THE INN-KEEPER AT CESENA..*Edward Le Hay*
FIRST ARCHER.....*Charles Vincent*
SECOND ARCHER.....*Lawrence Richman*
LEDUC.....*Ernest Cossart*
SIGNOR BELLINI, a Banker of Cesena,
Harold Hartsell
A GAMBLER.....*Harry Redding*
MONSIEUR DUBOIS.....*Victor Benoit*
THE ABBÉ BERNIS, Ambassador of France,
Horace Braham
THE INN-KEEPER AT THE
HOTEL DES BALANCES ....*A. G. Andrews*
MONSIEUR ANTOINE.....*David Glassford*
FIRST POSTILLION.....*James Powers*
SECOND POSTILLION.....*Edward F. Snow*
THIRD POSTILLION.....*Frank Newcomb*

FOURTH POSTILLION.....*T. C. Wallace*
THE BEAUTIFUL GOVERNESS....*Gypsy O'Brien*
THE DANCER FROM MILAN.....*Mary Ellis*
THE COURTESAN.....*Judith Vosselli*
ROSE.....*Sheila Hayes*
MANON .....*Nellie Burt*

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I: *The principal room of an Inn at Cesena, Italy, in the year 1755.*

ACT II: *A private room in the Hotel des Balances, on the shores of the Lake of Geneva, ninety days later.*

ACT III: *The same room, twenty-two years later.*

The production staged by Gilbert Miller.

PROLOGUE

The inner curtain is disclosed to the vibrant monotonous strumming of a guitar.

The guitar-player is standing against the left proscenium. He is not a great master of his instrument, but he plays with taste and intensity of feeling. It is quite evident that he will never get beyond the introduction of his lay, but he will go on until someone stops him, an ecstatic and eternal "till ready."

A gust of laughter blows in from the right. PULCINELLA *appears, colossally Bacchio, incapable of navigation without the posterior support of a minute negro page.*

Two masked charmers loll devotedly upon either of his arms. Dandies and masked ballerine come after them.

It is, obviously, quite some night.

ARLECCHINO *comes, bearing* COLUMBINE *upon his shoulders. She slips down, when they have come to the center of the stage and they whirl together.*

While they are still whirling, a very thin Gentleman, clad entirely in black, forces a ROMAN SOLDIER *into the scene. The black one is deeply engrossed in a pantomimic argument over some ultra-subtle problem of metaphysics. His opponent opposes him very feebly, does*

what he can to overcome the wine with which he is overfull and to conceal his entirely pardonable boredom.

More dandies and masked ballerine are amused by this and pay very little attention to any of it. Slowly the groups move from left to right disappearing one by one at the right. Complete darkness broken only by laughter and the relentless guitar.

CASANOVA

ACT I

SCENE: *The lights reveal the principal room of a considerable Inn of Cesena, Italy, in the year* 1755. *An arch—left—shows the gambling room with the low table at which several men and women are playing.* CASANOVA *is one of them.* GIULIETTA *sits beside him.* ALFANI-CELLI *is banker.* MANZONI *looks on. There are three or four others of less importance. The main room, with which the action is most concerned, is a rococo hall of the worst period, rather comically imitated from similar rooms in the hostelries of the capital; lurid paintings, gilt ornament, Venetian mirrors, candles which have dripped their candlesticks to waxen formlessness, a writing-table with inkstand, quills and such. In short, an inn which is a little more than an inn and yet not quite a hotel.*

A staircase leads to upper rooms, two doors, side by side and a third which would appear to be a corridor to the upper floor of the house. The large door gives on the inn courtyard. There is a door beneath the stairs which leads to the kitchens.

A WAITER *is sleeping on a stool down stage. The*

gambling is in progress. Insistent knocking on the door arouses the waiter.

ALFANI CELLI. Place your stakes.

MANZONI. On the seven—on the seven.

ALFANI CELLI. The stakes are laid.

WAITER. I'm coming—I'm coming. [*Going to the door and unbolting it.*]

[PULCINELLA, *the two* MASKED WOMEN, BATTISTA, *the* MAN IN BLACK, *and the* ROMAN SOLDIER *stagger into the hall.*]

MANZONI. I call the turn, seven, seven, ten.

ALFANI CELLI. Seven, seven, ten. Are your stakes laid?

MANZONI. Yes, yes, go on.

MAN IN BLACK. What I mean to say—if nothing does not exist, then there cannot be nothing and if nothing cannot be and yet God created the World from nothing, then where are you?

PULCINELLA. What? Three abreast up that ladder? Eh, there, Battista! Help the ladies up and leave me to my fate. Battista, do you hear me? [*The* PAGE *emerging from beneath,* PULCINELLA *sits heavily on the floor.*] Battista! Battista!

MAN IN BLACK. I hope I make myself quite clear?

GIULIETTA. You go to bed, old hero.

[MAN IN BLACK *and the* ROMAN SOLDIER *go out. Meanwhile the* PAGE *has raised* PULCINELLA *to his feet and has propped him against the banister.*]

PULCINELLA. That's the better position. Now the ladies, and don't drop them, or I'll . . .

GIULIETTA. Give us some money—there's a dear.

PULCINELLA. But don't stay long away from old Pulcinella.

GIULIETTA. Only a moment and your doves fly home to you, young Apollo.

[*The* HUNGARIAN CAPTAIN *and* HENRIETTE *enter from the courtyard. They stand by the foot of the stairs. The* CAPTAIN *is elderly, courtly, and sympathetic. He is dressed in the scarlet tunic and leopard skin of a Hungarian officer.* HENRIETTE *wears an enveloping cloak. Her face is covered by a mask which she holds in her hand.*]

CAPTAIN. Madame, I shall fetch you the key to your room.

HENRIETTE. Your own key should do well enough. Don't the rooms communicate?

CAPTAIN. I am thinking only of your——

HENRIETTE. My reputation needn't trouble you. Why not let the world continue to think me your mistress? What difference does it make, my friend?

CAPTAIN. You are still so sad.

HENRIETTE. Do you wonder?

CAPTAIN. Forgive me.

HENRIETTE. No, my friend. It is I who ask forgiveness of you. I accepted your proposal, ambiguous and offensive as it was, with my eyes open—and through all that has happened since these three days that we have

been together, my own father could not have been more tender. You have been more than my own father ever was.

CAPTAIN. Had I been a boy of twenty, I should have behaved no differently. I respect you, believe me!

HENRIETTE. I do believe you. Thank you.

CAPTAIN. Madame.

HENRIETTE. My grief has been enough of a burden to you. You are a true knight.

CAPTAIN. Then you must permit me to fetch your key. [*He goes out behind the stairway. In the meanwhile,* CASANOVA *and* MANZONI *have risen from the gambling table. They come into the scene proper.* CASANOVA *is masked and he wears a long black cloak. He crosses to the foot of the stairs.*]

CASANOVA. Madame.

HENRIETTE [*standing on the first landing*]. Sir.

CASANOVA. Do you still deny me the vision behind your mask?

HENRIETTE. I do not think I know you, sir.

CASANOVA. Say, rather, that you do not recognize me. I wore no mask yesterday.

HENRIETTE. Then I have forgotten you.

CASANOVA. Cruel! Take off your mask—Only a glimpse—I ask no more. Since I heard your voice yesterday I have not known a moment's peace. I must learn in what loveliness of flesh the gods enshrine that voice. Take off your mask!

HENRIETTE. No!

CASANOVA. Afraid of the old man?

HENRIETTE. Sir, I do not wish to unmask.

CASANOVA. I see. [*Lightly.*] In that case—if you can spare my society? Thank you. I may as well return to the table.

HENRIETTE. I wish you luck, sir. [*Going up the stairs, two steps.*]

CASANOVA. Unlucky at love, lucky at—— [*He stamps his foot.*] Take off your mask!

HENRIETTE. You are impertinent.

CASANOVA [*with a deep bow*]. Madame! [*Turns and goes back to the gambling table.*]

HENRIETTE. Oh!

[*The* CAPTAIN *returns in time to hear* HENRIETTE'S *exclamation of indignation.*]

CAPTAIN. What is it?

HENRIETTE. That adventurer I pointed out to you yesterday—he spoke to me again.

CAPTAIN. What? I think I can dispose of him. [*His hand goes to his sword.*]

HENRIETTE [*restraining him*]. Oh, please. He only asked me to show my face and when I refused, he withdrew quietly enough. He thinks me ugly as an ogress.

[*The* WAITER *re-enters, hangs up his keys and goes to sleep in the corner.*]

CAPTAIN. Oho, is that the cause of your bad humor?

[*She smiles and they go up the stairs together.*]

MANZONI. A hundred sequins on the ace.

HENRIETTE. Do you think that I—for that sort of person?

[*While the* CAPTAIN *is unlocking the door of* HENRIETTE'S *room, she comes to the edge of the balcony and removes her mask. She looks at* CASANOVA, *but he does not turn.*]

CAPTAIN [*holding door of her room*]. Good-night, madame.

HENRIETTE. How soon do we leave, dear Captain?

CAPTAIN. I have ordered the chaise in an hour.

HENRIETTE. Best say "good morning" then. [*He enters the room next hers.*]

ALFANI CELLI. Place your stakes, if you please.

MANZONI. On the queen, this time.

ALFANI CELLI. The seven wins, the queen loses.

[*The* INNKEEPER, *followed by the* LIEUTENANT OF ROMAN ARCHERS, *stealthily enters from the courtyard. At the foot of the stairs the* LIEUTENANT *points up to the room of the* HUNGARIAN CAPTAIN. *The* INNKEEPER *shakes his head and points to the door behind the staircase. Whereupon the* LIEUTENANT *turns and beckons to his two men who have been waiting in the courtyard. They enter on tiptoe, carrying muskets, and follow the* INNKEEPER *out through door beneath the staircase. The* LIEUTENANT *brings up the rear. During all this the* GAMBLERS *have been intent upon their game.*]

CASANOVA [*rising from the table and coming into the main room. He has removed his cloak and his mask and now stands revealed in all the magnificence of his scarlet*

and gold suit. CASANOVA *is now in the full flush of his youth. To the* WAITER]. Hi! Fetch me a glass of water.

MANZONI [*following him*]. Well, you've lost!

CASANOVA [*tossing a gold piece*]. I've lost everything, this is my last!

MANZONI. You have no luck tonight?

CASANOVA. Unlucky at cards, lucky at—something else. I don't think God intended me for a gambler, Manzoni. I shall go to Naples and my Theresa whom I adore better than all the thirty-three mistresses who have preceded her.

MANZONI. And the unknown, just now?

CASANOVA. She is faithful to a lover of sixty—and as she won't take off her mask, I think she must be a negress. She does not interest me, Manzoni.

MANZONI. Do you really leave tonight?

CASANOVA. At sunrise, I think. That is to say, if I can escape my worthy host and his reckoning. Damn him! [WAITER *returns with a glass of water which* CASANOVA *drinks eagerly. He returns glass to tray and* WAITER *turns to go.*] Hi!

WAITER. Did you call, sir?

CASANOVA. You know my servant?

WAITER. Indeed, yes, sir.

CASANOVA. You will send him to me at once. [*Throws him the gold piece.*]

WAITER [*overcome*]. For me?

CASANOVA. If you are not quick I can take it back.

WAITER. No, sir, I fly! [*He exits.*]

MANZONI. You said that was the last. Are you mad?

CASANOVA. I am penitent. Mahomet was right when he forbade games of chance. Have I not said I shall return to Theresa? I have no need of gold with her.

[LEDUC, CASANOVA's *servant, enters from the kitchen, wiping the wine which he has been drinking from his mouth. He is Scapin to the life.*]

LEDUC. You sent for me, monsieur?

CASANOVA. Pardon me, Manzoni, my servant—I must give the orders for our departure.

LEDUC. I have already put the trunks on the coach, monsieur.

CASANOVA. Good!

LEDUC. The fare is seven sequins. . . .

CASANOVA. High, Leduc, but not unreasonable.

LEDUC. The driver demands his payment in advance.

CASANOVA. H'm.

LEDUC. Annoying, monsieur, but not fatal.

CASANOVA. No——

LEDUC. Who gives away gold has silver to spend. . . .

CASANOVA. Gold?

LEDUC. The waiter, monsieur?

CASANOVA. The waiter?

LEDUC. Has monsieur forgotten the gold piece he gave the waiter?

CASANOVA. Leduc, a gentleman never remembers his tips. Besides that was the end of it.

LEDUC. The end?

CASANOVA. I make it a point always to spend the last gold piece as lightly as I won the first.

LEDUC. I only wish I had drunk more heartily, monsieur. My own bill in the kitchen is but four sequins.

[*The* INNKEEPER, *holding a paper in his hand, enters from the kitchen.*]

CASANOVA. What of it, Leduc?

INNKEEPER. I take the liberty of presenting the Chevalier's account.

CASANOVA. It is a gross liberty. How much?

INNKEEPPER. Lodging, twelve sequins. With the suppers the chevalier has ordered every evening and the wine for your servants in all a hundred and two sequins. . . .

LEDUC. What? He charges us as though we were mere merchants.

CASANOVA. He knows no better, Leduc. Pay him.

LEDUC. Monsieur, forgive me. [*Overcome with mortification.*] I forgot to call at our bankers. [CASANOVA *wonders how long he will endure such negligence.*] Of course, if Monsieur insists I could take the gold out of our trunks.

CASANOVA. That seems extreme. The trunks are closed.

INNKEEPER. What trunks? You have no trunks.

CASANOVA. All the more reason. [LEDUC *turns triumphantly to* INNKEEPER.] His bill can wait for our return.

INNKEEPER. Before either one of you sets a foot in that coach——

CASANOVA. I think he might pay our fares to Naples, into the bargain, eh, Leduc?

LEDUC. Obviously, monsieur.

CASANOVA. Yes. As Leduc says—obviously. See to our fares, and any girl you find who is traveling our way—that is an attractive girl—pay her fare, too. You can put them all on the hill.

INNKEEPER. Look here.

LEDUC. Shh! [*In a fierce whisper.*] Mind your tongue when you speak to the Chevalier.

INNKEEPER. Chevalier. What right has he to that title?

LEDUC. Every right. He created it himself.

INNKEEPER. But I——

LEDUC [*very darkly*]. Be an obliging fellow and we may spare your life!

[*The* INNKEEPER, *defeated, backs out into the kitchen.*]

CASANOVA. Leduc!

LEDUC. Monsieur?

CASANOVA. We need money.

LEDUC. We have needed it for some time, monsieur.

CASANOVA [*glancing toward the faro table*]. We need money and there is money there.

LEDUC. You cannot play, if you have nothing to play with, unless——

CASANOVA. Aha! I see you have a thought!

LEDUC. One can play on credit, monsieur.

CASANOVA. I cannot play on credit with Alfani-Celli.

LEDUC. Alfani Celli?

CASANOVA. That is the banker's name. Look closely at his face, Leduc. Is he not the rascal whom we cheated last month at Milan?

LEDUC. Come, monsieur, before he recognizes you.

CASANOVA. That is not the only way to avoid disgrace. One can close the lips of rumor——

LEDUC. A duel, monsieur?

CASANOVA. Leave him to me.

LEDUC. But, monsieur——

CASANOVA [*waving him aside*]. Leave him to me!

[LEDUC *goes out.* MANUONI *joins* CASANOVA.]

MANZONI. Chevalier, do not play any more tonight.

CASANOVA. Why not?

MANZONI. Some ugly whispers, Chevalier.

CASANOVA. About the banker?

MANZONI. About you, monsieur.

CASANOVA. About me? The banker thinks to conceal his own dishonesty by accusng an honest man. [*Raising his voice.*] I watched the banker's hands, Manzoni. I saw—— [*so that the banker may hear him*] him as clearly as I see you, correcting Fortune, and like a lamb, I let him fleece me.

[ALFANI CELLI *rises suddenly. The game is stopped and there is complete silence.*]

MANZONI. You think he cheated?

CASANOVA. Think? I know he cheated.

[ALFANI CELLI *comes out from the gambling room and strides angrily to* CASANOVA.]

ALFANI CELLI. Sir! Do you mean to say I cheated?

CASANOVA. You heard me say I know you cheated!

ALFANI CELLI. It is you who cheat! Shall I wait you in the courtyard?

CASANOVA [*suavely*]. As you please! [ALFANI CELLI *starts for the door.*] I do not relish the notion of wiping my sword on so dirty a rag as yourself. [ALFANI CELLI *turns, his hand on sword again.* MANZONI *interposes.*] Still, as you find me in good humor—in half an hour.

ALFANI CELLI [*at the door*]. In half an hour. [*He goes out.*]

[*The* GAMBLERS *go on with their play.* CASANOVA *crosses to the table and stands idly watching them. The* INNKEEPER, *followed by the* LIEUTENANT *and the two* ARCHERS, *comes out from the kitchen. They stealthily go up the stairs. The* INNKEEPER *unlocks the door to* HENRIETTE'S *room and the* LIEUTENANT *enters. The two* ARCHERS *remain on the upper landing. Presently a scream is heard from* HENRIETTE. *The* GAMBLERS *leave the table and crowd into the main room.*]

CASANOVA. In God's name.

[*The* CAPTAIN *attired in dressing gown and night cap rushes from his room, and pushes the two* ARCHERS *down the stairs.*]

CAPTAIN. Get out of my way, rascal!

[HENRIETTE *screams a second time. The* CAPTAIN *immediately enters* HENRIETTE'S *door and drags the* LIEUTENANT *out.*]

LIEUTENANT. In the name of the Holy Inquisition!

CAPTAIN. To hell with your Holy Inquisition!

INNKEEPER [*who has come down the stairs, speaks to the* ARCHERS]. Stay where you are!

CASANOVA [*at the foot of the stairs*]. Innkeeper, what the devil are you up to?

INNKEEPER. There's an old man in there with a young girl. They're carrying on, if you ask me, sir. The Bishop's archers have come to investigate and if there's no marriage papers to be found, it's prison for the pair of them.

CASANOVA. Who forced the door?

INNKEEPER. No one forced it. It was my duty.

CASANOVA. It was a swine's duty! The first requisite of an Innkeeper, my moralistic friend, is a winking eye.

[GIULIETTA *and some of the* GAMBLERS *come forward.*]

GIULIETTA. What is it?

INNKEEPER. The Bishop's archers.

CASANOVA [*bounding up the stairs*]. The Bishop's bandits, in league with this scoundrel to blackmail travelers! [*He throws one* ARCHER *down the stairs.*]

1ST ARCHER. In the Bishop's name!

CASANOVA. Go tell your Bishop that I shall wait upon him to ask his grace why it is not permissible to spend a peaceful night in his pious city. [*He hurls the second* ARCHER *after the first.*] Go and announce the visit of Casanova, Chevalier de Seingalt.

THE LIEUTENANT. [In the Bishop's name.

CAPTAIN. And to hell with your Bishop!

[CASANOVA *bounds upstairs and pulls the* LIEUTENANT *away.*]

THE LIEUTENANT. Who are you?

CASANOVA. An Italian who does not love to blush for Italy.

THE LIEUTENANT. In the name of the Law!

CASANOVA. Were the law respected in Cesena you would long since have rotted on the gallows.

CAPTAIN. You dog! [*Kicks the* LIEUTENANT *in the seat.*]

THE LIEUTENANT. I'll make you pay for that. [CASANOVA *kicks him.*] Two against one!

CASANOVA. A moment since you were three against one.

CAPTAIN. Yokel! [*Administers a third kick on the same target.*]

THE LIEUTENANT. Swords and pistols!

CASANOVA [*calling over balustrade*]. Fetch me my riding whip! [*Another kick. The* LIEUTENANT *runs down to the first landing.*]

CAPTAIN. Robber! [*Turning to* CASANOVA.] Sir, I thank you! [*They shake hands.*]

LIEUTENANT [*retreating to the first landing*]. I shall return.

CASANOVA [*fiercely rushing after him*]. You shall not leave. [*The* LIEUTENANT *now thoroughly terrified, bolts through the doors leading out into the courtyard.*] I am going at once to the Bishop. I shall drag him from his bed. These scoundrels will beg your pardon on their knees.

GIULIETTA. The coward! He didn't even draw his sword! [*She and the other* GAMBLERS *go back to the table.*]

MANZONI [*as he returns to table*]. Ladies and gentlemen, I make another bank. Eight hundred sequins.

CAPTAIN [*on the landing*]. To whom am I indebted, sir?

CASANOVA. I am Casanova, Chevalier de Seingalt.

CAPTAIN. I am Michael Echedy, Captain in the service of her Imperial Highness, Maria Theresa. We leave this morning for Parma, my companion and myself. Do you also travel through?

CASANOVA. My road lies southwards, Captain. I leave within the hour by the Post for Naples.

HENRIETTE [*calling*]. Captain!

CAPTAIN. Excuse me. [*He goes up the stairs to her door.*]

CASANOVA. By all means.

GAMBLER. Even to win—twenty sequins.

MANZONI. Forty on the ace.

GAMBLER. How many queens to play?

MANZONI. Two.

GAMBLER. Then ten on the queen.

CAPTAIN [*coming out from* HENRIETTE'S *room*]. Sir, my companion bids me to entreat your patience for a moment while she makes herself presentable. She will add her thanks to mine.

CASANOVA. How long I should cherish the memory of her thanks, could I but wait for them.

CAPTAIN. Surely your coach can wait. Come now— don't disappoint her.

CASANOVA. Say to the lady that if Casanova de Seingalt comes to a traveler's assistance, it is not in the hope of recompense. Nor would I have her think me such a one as forces favor which has been denied me. Do you kiss her hand graciously, sir, in my behalf, and beg her not to waste another fleeting thought upon my shadow that has so vagrantly crossed her path. And so, goodbye, sir. The coach is waiting.

CAPTAIN [*stopping him*]. She will be sorry, Chevalier. I should myself accompany you to your coach but that my costume leaves something to be desired. A moment, I entreat you, Chevalier.

CASANOVA. Captain.

[*The* CAPTAIN *retires into his room upstairs.* HENRIETTE, *without mask, comes from her room. She pauses on the threshold to powder her face. It is evident that she has dressed in great haste. She looks about curiously from the balcony. When she sees* CASANOVA *she smiles slowly and comes down the stair. He sees her image over his shoulder and turns abruptly. The* INNKEEPER *returns.*]

MANZONI. Place your stakes, place your stakes.

GAMBLER. I set five sequins on this card.

MANZONI. The stakes are laid.

GAMBLER. He wins again.

[LEDUC *enters hurriedly from the kitchen.*]

LEDUC. The coach leaves at once, monsieur.

CASANOVA [*not taking his eyes from* HENRIETTE]. The coach leaves for Naples. We do not.

LEDUC. But, monsieur——

CASANOVA. You heard.

LEDUC. But the Innkeeper has paid our fares.

CASANOVA. We leave at my convenience.

LEDUC. For Naples?

CASANOVA. For Parma.

[LEDUC *looks up and sees* HENRIETTE. *He understands.*]

LEDUC. You have my approval. [*He goes out to the kitchen.*].

[*The* CAPTAIN, *now dressed in his uniform, comes out from his room and comes down the stairs, leading* HENRIETTE.]

CAPTAIN. Chevalier!—Chevalier!—This gentleman is our chivalrous protector, the Chevalier de Saint—de Saint——

CASANOVA. De Seingalt.

CAPTAIN. The companion of my travels, Mlle. Henriette.

CASANOVA [*bowing low*]. Henriette?

CAPTAIN. Henriette—I think that will suffice.

CASANOVA. Oh, yes.

HENRIETTE [*on the landing*]. I have just heard, Chevalier, that you are leaving and I [*coming down a few steps*] have come down to thank you.

CASANOVA. Oh, madame.

HENRIETTE [*offering her hand*]. I do thank you.

CASANOVA [*kissing her hand with profound reverence*]. You overwhelm me.

HENRIETTE. Since you are going—so quickly——

CASANOVA. No, not yet. You leave, I think, by the poste-chaise? [LEDUC *comes in from the kitchen and remains discreetly at the back.*] I have a coach with such springs, madame, you ride like rose-leaves on the winds of April. Dismiss your chaise, madame. Honor my coach.

[LEDUC *almost bursts with suppressed laughter.*]

CAPTAIN. But, my dear sir, a moment since your face was turned towards Naples.

CASANOVA. My face is changeable. [*Looks at* HENRIETTE *again.*] Do you accept my invitation?

CAPTAIN. That depends on Madame.

HENRIETTE. Oh, yes, and with great pleasure.

CAPTAIN. When do you leave?

CASANOVA. Madame will choose the hour.

HENRIETTE. At four o'clock?

CASANOVA. At four. [*He makes a deep bow.*]

CAPTAIN. Excuse us then, Chevalier. We must attend to our trunks.

[*They go upstairs and reënter their rooms.* LEDUC, *in the doorway, bursts out laughing.* CASANOVA *turns to him.*]

CASANOVA. What are you laughing at?

LEDUC. The coach with the springs! Oh, God, the springs!

CASANOVA. You annoy me. [LEDUC *suddenly checks*

his laughter.] Listen to what I have to say. Yesterday I saw an English coach in the courtyard of the White Swan. The owner offered to sell it to me. Go and buy it.

LEDUC. Where does the owner live?

CASANOVA. How should I know? Find him.

LEDUC. At three in the morning?

CASANOVA. He is English; he will be in bed. Tell him that I offer him a hundred louis for it. Come back at once. In an hour we must be on the road.

LEDUC. That may be difficult.

CASANOVA. Delay will make it no easier.

LEDUC. And the money?

CASANOVA. The money is my concern. Get me the coach.

[LEDUC *goes out to the courtyard.* CASANOVA *looks at his watch.*]

MANZONI [*leaving the table*]. I thought you were leaving Cesena.

CASANOVA. I am leaving presently—for Parma.

MANZONI. For Parma? How about Naples, and your divine Theresa?

CASANOVA. Her name is Henriette, Manzoni, and I love her, although she is involved with a Captain old enough to be her father. It is three now. By four she must be rid of him, so that we may leave together. And by that time I must have as many times twenty sequins as I would pass radiant days in her company. And I must buy my coach, pay my bill.

INNKEEPER [*at the doorway to the courtyard*]. Signor Alfani Celli awaits you in the courtyard.

[*The* GAMBLERS, *hearing this, rise from the table.*]

CASANOVA. Oh, I forget. And fight a duel. [CASANOVA *exits. The* GAMBLERS *come into the center of the room. The* INNKEEPER *and* MANZONI *watch the duel from the door.*]

INNKEEPER. If only they wouldn't fight in front of my inn!

MANZONI. Look at his attack. There's not another like it on the Continent. [*One of the women screams.*] Bravo!

INNKEEPER. What's that he's holding in his left hand?

MANZONI. His watch! He's pressed for time.

INNKEEPER. They haven't either of them paid their bills.

MANZONI. Bravo!

CASANOVA [*off stage*]. Aah!!

INNKEEPER [*ducking as though he had, himself, received the sword-thrust*]. Oooh!!

MANZONI. There! That was his famous thrust.

CASANOVA [*he enters, his bloody sword in one hand, and his watch in the other*]. Some one had better fetch a surgeon. He may die. A quarter after three.

[*The* GAMBLERS *slowly return to their table.*]

INNKEEPER. If he dies, do I add his bill to yours?

CASANOVA. Add what you like. So much for brave Alfani Celli. [*Turns to table.*]

THE BANKER. Will you take the bank now, monsieur?

CASANOVA. What?

THE BANKER. Will you take the bank?

CASANOVA. Just a moment. Have you any money, Manzoni?

MANZONI. No.

CASANOVA [*to* BANKER]. No. [To MANZONI.] Pauper!

MANZONI. Five on the king.

[LEDUC *enters breathlessly.*]

LEDUC. Sst! [CASANOVA *comes to meet him.*] I've got your coach. I found the Englishman playing at the Golden Stag. They'd cleaned him out. He came down twenty louis.

CASANOVA. I make you a present of them.

LEDUC. I thank you, sir. [*He catches an imaginary coin, tries it in his teeth and pockets it.*]

CASANOVA. Did you tell him I should come myself to pay him?

LEDUC. I told him Monsieur was a noble Lord who wished to remain in-cong-wee-to.

CASANOVA. I gave you permission to use my name.

LEDUC. I used my own discreton instead, monsieur.

CASANOVA. And the coach?

[*Enter* SIGNOR BELLINI, *a Venetian Jew banker of Cesena.*]

LEDUC. Will be here in half an hour.

CASANOVA. Excellent, you may go.

BELLINI. Pst!

LEDUC. Are you calling your dog?

BELLINI. Are you the servant of the noble Venetian who gives gold sequins for a glass of water?

LEDUC. Chevalier. [*Points to* BELLINI, *who bows deeply to* CASANOVA.]

CASANOVA. He bows, Leduc, he bows. Who are you?

BELLINI. I am Signor Bellini, the banker here.

CASANOVA. The banker here? What is it you want?

BELLINI. If by any chance your Excellency is in need of anything.

CASANOVA. What could I be in need of?

BELLINI. If your Excellency has gold to change.

CASANOVA. We have packed our gold.

BELLINI. Oh! [*He shows his disappointment.*]

CASANOVA. I had thought of changing our gold in Parma.

LEDUC. All of it?

CASANOVA. Yes, you see it has more value there since Don Alphonso has become king.

BELLINI. Well, then, perhaps some other enterprise of finance?

CASANOVA. I doubt it, I doubt it. Are you of Cesena?

BELLINI. I am a Venetian.

CASANOVA. I am a Venetian too. [*He turns to* LEDUC.] One can hardly refuse a fellow Venetian, eh, Leduc?

LEDUC. Monsieur's heart always misleads him.

CASANOVA. I wish there was something I could do. Leduc, didn't you say that you were short of change.

LEDUC. Yes, monsieur.

CASANOVA. Let me see. How much can you dispose of at the moment?

BELLINI. I have only a hundred sequins with me, my Lord, but by noon to-morrow——

CASANOVA. By noon to-morrow will be too late, my friend. Fetch me a quill. [LEDUC *goes up for writing materials and returns with an escritoire.*] Let me see, there is something I might do! I am sorry I cannot do more for a compatriot. I'll give you a draft on my banker in Parma for one hundred sequins. [*He writes out a draft, dusts it, and then gives it to* LEDUC.]

BELLINI [*offering the money*]. The money, my Lord.

CASANOVA. Give it to my servant. Good-morning. [CASANOVA *turns away from him.*]

[BELLINI *counts ten coins into* LEDUC'S *palm.*]

LEDUC. Fifty, eighty, ninety! Right, quite right. [*He gives the draft to* BELLINI.] Take good care of this. Think! The signature of the Chevalier de Seingalt! Some day it may be of great historical value. Keep it. Keep it always.

BELLINI. If I can be of any further service to your master, let him command me. My compliments to him.

LEDUC. I accept them for myself. Au revoir. [BELLINI *exits. No sooner is he gone than* CASANOVA *seizes the gold from* LEDUC.] Monsieur, you should be called

before the footlights. I may be the comedian but you are my author.

CASANOVA [*tossing him a coin*]. Here's your reward that you refused a moment ago. Return in half an hour and announce my coach.

[LEDUC *goes off. The* CAPTAIN *comes out of his room and down the stairs.*]

CAPTAIN. Here I am, dear Chevalier. Henriette is coming in a moment.

CASANOVA [*glancing at his watch again*]. Captain, I have very little time. Will you promise me to take no offense if I speak quite frankly?

CAPTAIN. No time, dear fellow? Why, between here and Parma we shall have time enough to wear out all our jaws with talking.

CASANOVA. I mean that I have no time to knock upon the door of discretion. I must break in at the window. How long have you been living with this lady?

CAPTAIN. Living? At my age, alas, one no longer "lives" with ladies. One is no better than an old box of memories.

CASANOVA. How long have you protected her, then?

CAPTAIN. Such seriousness, my boy? Well, since you ask me—for three days.

CASANOVA. Who is she?

CAPTAIN. I wish I knew. I can tell you no more of her than that she is French, that she calls herself Henriette and that she is beautiful.

CASANOVA. That much I know. How did you meet her?

CAPTAIN. One of my friends, an officer, went to Rome on a certain mission for the Empress. I took a six months' leave to keep him company. I spend a month boring myself about the Vatican. Then Cardinal Albani sent my friend to Naples with despatches. There I met her.

CASANOVA [*in an agony of impatience*]. Henriette—was she alone?

CAPTAIN. She was with an old officer. She has told me since that he was her husband's father who wanted to imprison her in a Carmelite convent. She made her escape. And in the process, she found me.

CASANOVA. Bah! What does the story matter? Captain, I am thirty years old. I love Henriette. This morning at sunrise I plan to take her with me to Parma as my mistress. And now, sir, I am at your service, here or in the courtyard, as you choose.

CAPTAIN. What a thing youth is, to be sure!

CASANOVA. Captain, I've much to do.

CAPTAIN. But, if you had only been willing to listen to me, my dear fellow, you would see that I am not the one who blocks your way.

CASANOVA. Who, then?

CAPTAIN. Why, Henriette has made me promise that, immediately we reach Parma, I will leave her and that I will never give a sign that I have ever known her.

CASANOVA. Have you consented?

CAPTAIN. I prefer not to play rôles for which I am too old.

CASANOVA. Then there is some one awaiting her at Parma? I shall kill him.

CAPTAIN. And how do you think that would please her? Are you so sure Henriette would want him killed?

CASANOVA. Perhaps you're right. I still have half an hour.

CAPTAIN. Well, my boy, I'm going back to bed. At my age one has much need of sleep. You will call me when your coach is ready? [*He starts to go upstairs.*]

CASANOVA. Oh, I'll call you.

CAPTAIN. You won't forget?

CASANOVA. Oh, I won't forget. [*The* CAPTAIN *exits into his room upstairs.* CASANOVA *goes to the gaming table.*] My friends, I will join you for five minutes only, because I'm leaving you to pursue my travels. Ninety sequins. The queen to win, the ace to lose.

[*The door opens and* DUBOIS, *a little hunchback, enters, ushering in the* ABBÉ BERNIS, *Ambassador to the King of France.*]

BANKER. The ace loses, the queen wins.

CASANOVA. Paroli! The ace to lose, the queen to win!

[DUBOIS *and* BERNIS *stand looking at the group around the table.*]

DUBOIS [*to* BERNIS]. Our information is correct, your Excellency. That is Casanova there.

BANKER. Ace loses; queen wins.

CASANOVA. Paroli! Ace to win, queen to lose.

DUBOIS. I assure you, your Excellency, that if any one can help us it is Casanova.

BERNIS. I have heard of his financial genius.

BANKER. Queen loses, ace wins.

CASANOVA. Another paroli—five to win, seven to lose.

BERNIS. It was his scheme that paid the debt of Venice, was it not?

DUBOIS. Yes, your Excellency.

A GAMBLER. Seven loses, five wins.

BANKER. This will be the last stake.

CASANOVA. Paroli! Eight—four—nine.

BERNIS. When he leaves the table, present him to me.

BANKER. Eight-four-nine. The bank is yours!

DUBOIS. Did you ever see such amazing luck?

BERNIS. Astounding!

[*The* GAMBLERS *all rise and depart, talking excitedly. During this there is the following dialogue.*]

GIULIETTA. All in five minutes!

GAMBLER. I thank you, Chevalier, for breaking the bank. Now, I can go to bed.

MANZONI [*shaking* CASANOVA'S *hand*]. A safe voyage to you.

CASANOVA. Are you leaving too?

MANZONI. Didn't I tell you that our friend Inerine has commissioned me to look after his wife?

CASANOVA. What—— You!

MANZONI. I follow her everywhere.

CASANOVA. Even to bed. Au revoir!

[DUBOIS *advances to* CASANOVA.]

CASANOVA. Ah, my dear Dubois!

DUBOIS. Ah, my dear Chevalier! [*Introducing* BERNIS.] Monsieur l'Abbe .Bernis, the Ambassador to his most Christian Majesty, the King of France.

CASANOVA [*acknowledging* BERNIS *and addressing* LEDUC]. Take care of that! [*Indicating money on table.*] My purse won't hold it.

BERNIS. My dear Chevalier! I have been most desirous of meeting you. We have heard of your aptitude for finance.

CASANOVA. In what way can I serve you, your Excellency?

BERNIS. The matter is of too great importance to discuss here. May we have the pleasure of your company at breakfast?

CASANOVA. Delighted!

BERNIS. At nine o'clock?

CASANOVA. At nine o'clock.

BERNIS. At the Golden Stag?

CASANOVA. At the Golden Stag.

BERNIS. Until then——

CASANOVA. Until then.

[BERNIS *and* DUBOIS *leave.*]

LEDUC [*who has been counting the gold*]. Twenty-eight hundred sequins here, monsieur.

CASANOVA. Not sequins. Don't call them sequins, Leduc. They are days of luxury and freedom and happiness.

LEDUC. What was your first stake?

CASANOVA. Ninety sequins.

LEDUC. You risked it all?

CASANOVA. As I should have risked my life. Three months is there! Who cares what happens after eternity?

[HENRIETTE's *door opens.*]

LEDUC [*blandly*]. And the little lady?

CASANOVA. Have I ever permitted you to ask questions?

LEDUC. No, Monsieur, I was only asking myself.

CASANOVA. Watch at the door. No one is to be allowed to enter. Come back in a quarter of an hour and announce my coach.

[LEDUC *exits into the courtyard.*]

HENRIETTE [*coming down the stairs*]. The sun has not yet risen.

CASANOVA [*looking up at her*]. I think, madame, I look upon it at this moment.

HENRIETTE [*acknowledging the compliment with a smile*]. Do we start now?

CASANOVA. Whenever you command. [*Advancing towards the stairway, his face lifted to her.*] Madame, before we decide that I accompany you to Parma . . .

HENRIETTE. Why, only a moment since you said——

CASANOVA. I offered you my coach. It remains at your disposal. I make you a present of it. But my company on your journey—that, dear lady, depends upon your answer to a question.

HENRIETTE. What is the question?

CASANOVA [*abruptly*]. Who is awaiting you in Parma?

HENRIETTE. In Parma? No one, monsieur.

CASANOVA. Is that quite true? No one? Then why did you forbid the Captain to remain with you there?

HENRIETTE. I did not forbid him. I should not have had the right.

CASANOVA. What, then?

HENRIETTE. I begged him.

CASANOVA. And he agreed?

HENRIETTE. It will not be so painful for him to forget me.

CASANOVA. If he is capable of forgetting you he has never loved you. He has never heard your voice, his eyes have never seen you.

HENRIETTE. Poor old man. It was no more than a caprice. I think he has found these last three days long enough. Is that all you have to ask me?

CASANOVA. No, not quite all. I have still this to ask. May I accompany you to Parma?

HENRIETTE. Since I accept your coach——

CASANOVA. None the less, you must answer me, for I am standing on the brink of an abyss. My temples burst and I am dizzy. That is how desperately I hang upon your decision. Answer me, Madame. Answer me, admirable and beautiful Henriette. Shall I accompany you to Parma?

HENRIETTE. I ask myself that very question.

CASANOVA. Ah! Then you understand that I am

not such a one as our brave old Captain, to be set aside, to resign myself, to forget. Answer me, Henriette.

HENRIETTE. Must I say yes or no.

CASANOVA. If you say "Yes," then we shall go together and you will be mine, all mine and only mine. If you say "no," I am off now for Naples where I shall squander all the remainder of my life vainly striving to forget you.

HENRIETTE [*mockingly*]. I have never heard such a furious declaration of love. "Do you love me, Madame, or do you not? And if you do not, Madame—— Please go about your business."

CASANOVA. I might have declared my love very differently, Madame. I might have quoted many a beautiful declaration, throbbing and passionate, that I have made to other women in the past. I might have improvised in your honor a new flight of eloquence. Would that have convinced you better? Would you ask me to offer in a silken bonboniere the tempest that destroys me? What I have asked you is not delicate. There is no pathos in it and no chivalry. I grant you that. But it is the voice of so great a passion that my throat is parched with the few words of it, and my soul trembles that I should have said so much. Two roads lie before me. Answer me, Madame, and tell me which one I must follow. I give my life into your hands.

HENRIETTE. My hand trembles already with only my own fate to carry.

CASANOVA. Answer me yes, then, and entrust your fate to me forever.

HENRIETTE. If I accept——

CASANOVA. You do?

HENRIETTE [*stopping him with a sad little smile*]. If I accept, it will be because I feel the strength of your hand. I have been so lost these last three days, these last three days. This is the first adventure of my life, Monsieur.

CASANOVA. With that old man?

HENRIETTE. It was an adventure. I ran away with him. That much is true, no more.

CASANOVA. Why did you run away with him?

HENRIETTE. My husband's family would have locked me up. I wanted to be free. The Captain lodged across the street from me. He understood. I accepted his proposal. He took me away with him. All that has happened since has been so beautiful. [*There is a moment of silence.*] But in the world's eyes I have fallen and I must endure the shame of my fall.

CASANOVA. Is that why you begged him to leave you alone in Parma?

HENRIETTE. Yes.

CASANOVA. But what would you have done there? Have you been there before?

HENRIETTE. Never.

CASANOVA. Have you friends who live there?

HENRIETTE. No one.

CASANOVA. And money? Have you even enough money?

HENRIETTE. None.

CASANOVA. And you would have arrived so in a strange city, alone? What were you thinking of?

HENRIETTE. Escape, only escape.

CASANOVA. You will not be alone in Parma now, my poor Henriette. And if they come to fetch you my sword is at your service, now.

HENRIETTE. My husband is powerful. And yet I think I fear him least.

CASANOVA. Whom do you fear more?

HENRIETTE. Some one who has only to write me. Were it but a word all my courage and all my strength and all my will are lost together in an instant.

CASANOVA. A man? [HENRIETTE *comes very close to him and shows him a miniature which she wears on a chain about her neck. He examines it.*] Her face is wrinkled, her hair is white but she is beautiful in spite of old age. She is beautiful because she looks like you.

HENRIETTE. One day I shall be old, also. An old lady like my poor mother.

CASANOVA. You will be young always and always beautiful for my love will keep you so and I shall love you always.

HENRIETTE. If that were true! Just now you told me that if I refused your company you would go to Naples and forget me.

CASANOVA. That was an heroic attempt at defiance,

my dear lady. I doubt very much if Naples would agree with me now. [*She smiles.*] You must love me, do you hear? I wish it.

HENRIETTE. You must love me—I wish it. After all, all the beauty of wooing is in that phrase. When you say it, peace comes into my heart and I am like a traveler who sets his foot on shore after a long, long voyage. You are insistent, Chevalier. I think I like insistence. [CASANOVA *seizes her arm.*] You frighten me. I meant only to say that what pleased me most in you is the sense you give me of security. An hour ago I thought you an adventurer. I confess it. Oh, how strong you are and how sure! I thought you an adventurer——

CASANOVA. Do you ask me to pardon you? I, who an hour ago, here in this room took you for a——

HENRIETTE. Yes? [*She leans a little towards him.*]

CASANOVA [*he bends over her hand*]. Forgive me.

HENRIETTE [*smiling*]. Then we are quits. And we have learned that disillusionment may still be beautiful.

CASANOVA. How beautiful! And still you hold me off.

HENRIETTE [*still on the stairs*]. Three steps apart. Where will those three steps lead me?

CASANOVA. To happiness.

HENRIETTE. Oh, happiness.

CASANOVA. Look at me. I am young. I am afraid of nothing—man or law. I love you and my purse is filled with gold. Youth, love and gold. Where those three walk together, happiness cannot fail.

HENRIETTE. Youth, love and gold. If one of them were to fail us.

CASANOVA. We have all three to-day. Why need we think of to-morrow? Every moment is eternity. You shall come with me to Parma.

HENRIETTE. You shall come with me to Parma.

CASANOVA [*seizing her hand*]. Henriette. [*He covers her hands with kisses.*] My good, my dear Henriette. My dear, my beautiful Henriette. [*He takes her in his arms. The sun is rising and its light pouring through the door bathes them in glory.*] Look, the sun is rising. Its ardor envelopes all the world. The earth is golden for its kiss.

HENRIETTE. That is the gold of happiness.

CASANOVA [*he slaps his pocket*]. And I have more—plenty. [HENRIETTE *looks straight ahead.*] What is it?

HENRIETTE. The future.

CASANOVA. Even a little thought of the future robs the present of a moment.

[LEDUC *enters, turns his back to them and coughs discreetly. They start apart.*]

LEDUC. I have paid the Englishman for his coach. [CASANOVA *coughs.*] Will Monsieur travel under his own name or do I prepare the usual false passports?

CASANOVA [*angrily*]. Are you ready to leave?

LEDUC. Quite ready, Monsieur. I have even bought a traveling cloak for Madame, and a heavy veil.

CASANOVA. Who told you to buy a cloak?

LEDUC. Habit, Monsieur, habit. Why, this must be our fiftieth departure in love.

CASANOVA. Fool! [*He waves* LEDUC *off and crosses to face* HENRIETTE *on the stairs.*] To Parma. [HENRIETTE, *trembling, draws instinctively away as though she would go upstairs again.* CASANOVA *looks at her and makes his decision.*] I see you understand. Well? My servant is more honest than I. So much the better. [*He lifts his purse.*] My purse is full. I have counted it and made my calculations. Its leathern walls hold ninety days of happiness. Ninety celestial singing days. While this lasts, I can make you a queen in silks and laces. That I promise you and I can promise you no more. Do you ask me what comes after? I don't know. Nothing to fetter me. Fetters are death to me and I love life. My love for you will be a princely feat. But when the candles flicker, in their golden scones, when the gates of the palace are closed, I shall go on my way, humming a song. You know now what you may expect of me and now, for the last time, will you go with me to Parma?

HENRIETTE. I love you. [*They kiss. She throws a glance towards the* CAPTAIN'S *door.*] What will become of him?

CASANOVA. Who cares?

HENRIETTE. In spite of everything, I think he loved me a little. [*She takes* CASANOVA'S *hand.*] Come. [*They go upstairs, and stand in front of the* CAPTAIN'S *door. She knocks and opens it.*] He's asleep. Poor old man!

[*A coach horn sounds.*]

CASANOVA [*throwing his arms about her*]. Eh bien. En route! [*They come down the stairs.* CASANOVA *throws her cloak round her shoulders and looks back towards the* CAPTAIN'S *door.*] Poor old man!

CURTAIN

ACT II

SCENE: *The Hotel des Balances, at Geneva, three months later than the end of Act I. The action occurs in a spacious room, probably a salon and dining-room on the second floor of the establishment. The walls are rich, the furniture is new. The chairs are upholstered in gayly flowered petit point. A Louis XV harpsichord fills a corner. There is a sewing table with a basket upon it lined with rose-colored silk and filled with laces. At the rear a large bay window overlooks the placid loveliness of the lake with a balustrade between the lake shore and the house. Three steps lead to this window recess. A small round table holds a coffee service. Here and there—rare vases of Chinese and Sevres porcelain are filled with beautiful roses. It is late afternoon of a summer's day.*

AT RISE: LEDUC *is discovered standing by the window. A knock is heard.* LEDUC. You may enter.

INNKEEPER [*entering*]. A gentleman below has left this letter for Madame.

LEDUC. Well, tell the gentleman we will attend to this in due time. You may go.

[*The* INNKEEPER *leaves.* LEDUC *is turning the letter over, wondering if he will open it when he hears.*]

CASANOVA [*calling from the other room of the suite*].

Leduc! [LEDUC *starts and puts letter away. Goes to window.*] Leduc!

[CASANOVA *enters; he wears a dressing gown.*]

LEDUC. Monsieur?

CASANOVA. What are you doing?

LEDUC. Come and see. They've archers all around the house.

CASANOVA *goes to the window. A whistle, answered by another, is heard from the street below.*]

CASANOVA. The impertinence!

LEDUC. One of the shopkeepers here in Geneva must have stirred up the hornets.

CASANOVA. Which one?

LEDUC. We owe some twenty bills. Monsieur has bought things for Madame everywhere. [CASANOVA *nods.*] Or it might be the keeper of this hotel. This morning I saw him coming out of the Governor's house.

CASANOVA. How do they expect me to raise money if I cannot leave the inn?

LEDUC. Fortunately the archers, for all their whistling, do not prevent Monsieur from entering the gambling room downstairs.

CASANOVA. Where, unfortunately, the condition of my purse is but too well known. It is empty—I have nothing.

LEDUC. It would not be the first time Monsieur raised nothing to a large amount. Remember the night we left Cesena.

CASANOVA. My luck has changed from that very night.

At Parma I lost, and only the entreaties of Madame drew me from the table. From Parma to Geneva I have left a trail of gold, but that does not stop me from trying again. [LEDUC *nods sadly.*] I shall try it when every other means has failed. [*Turning to* LEDUC, *excited.*] Have you the bracelet that I ordered for Madame?

LEDUC. The jeweler would not leave it. He wanted forty louis.

CASANOVA. What became of the gold I gave you last night?

LEDUC. I used that to quiet the patience of the Innkeeper.

CASANOVA. Fool! So Madame has to do without her bracelet in order that that pig of an innkeeper may be satisfied.

LEDUC. In order that Madame, and you, and I should have a place to sleep.

[CASANOVA *gives to* LEDUC *his rings and watch.*]

CASANOVA. Get as much as you can for these.

LEDUC. Not much in Geneva.

CASANOVA. And be careful Madame does not see you bring me the money. I should be sorry if she heard of this.

LEDUC. You must not part with these, Monsieur.

CASANOVA. Without money I must part from Madame.

LEDUC. You have parted from many, Monsieur, but you have always kept your jewels, and if I may say so, Monsieur, I believe Madame would not refuse to share our luck.

CASANOVA. If I permitted it, Leduc, but I cannot. If she were like the others, I would keep her with me or let her go, just as it pleased her, but to remain with us while we are here means worry and privation. If the hem of her skirt should fray, if I should see unhappiness creep into those beautiful eyes, nothing else in life could make it worth the living.

LEDUC. But if she wishes to remain, Monsieur?

CASANOVA. Then pray God I shall be strong. Go, Leduc—hurry!

[LEDUC *bows and goes to the door, turns.*]

LEDUC. Oh, Monsieur, I forgot, a letter for Madame. The gentleman is waiting below. [*He gives letter to* CASANOVA *and goes out.*]

[HENRIETTE, *very beautifully dressed, enters from the bedroom. She goes to the work basket and picks up her laces, humming an air. She is looking at something which is hidden beneath them when* CASANOVA *turns and sees her—she commences to sew.*]

CASANOVA. You work at your sewing nowadays as though you were the sole support of aged parents. [*He tries to take her hand.*]

HENRIETTE. Careful—you will break the thread.

CASANOVA. What are you making? [*From the lake is heard the music of the orchestras on the barges.*]

HENRIETTE [*quietly puts his hand away from her basket*]. What is that music?

CASANOVA. There is a fête to-day on the lake in honor of the French Ambassador.

HENRIETTE. How gay!

CASANOVA. This just came for you. [*He gives her the letter, and turns moodily aside as she reads.*]

HENRIETTE. You seem downcast, my friend.

CASANOVA. I am sad ever since they recognized us in Parma. I have been like a hunted animal ever since our flight here. The thought that we may be discovered——

HENRIETTE. We have already been discovered.

CASANOVA. Already!

HENRIETTE. Look. [*She offers him the letter, which he takes.*] It is from my cousin Antoine. He is here in Geneva.

CASANOVA. Your cousin Antoine.

HENRIETTE. Yes, I heard from him a week ago and I answered that if he would come here to-day, I would see him.

CASANOVA. Why particularly to-day?

HENRIETTE. When his letter came, a week ago, I had not yet come to the end of the happiness my Chevalier promised me. I still had a week.

CASANOVA. You shall not see him.

HENRIETTE. I have promised.

CASANOVA. He will do his utmost to separate us.

HENRIETTE. If you bid me stay, I will never leave you.

CASANOVA. Then why have you sent for him?

HENRIETTE. Today is the ninetieth day. And I have no way of knowing that the candles which burned so brightly in their golden sconces through all the princely feast will not flicker out to-night.

CASANOVA. I love you more than ever.

HENRIETTE. You have taught me how one can love —and part bravely with a smile.

CASANOVA [*his vanity threatened*]. Could you do so?

HENRIETTE. Yes, if you bade me go, I should go. Worries, the ties of family—fetters are death to you. You told me so yourself.

CASANOVA. Henriette!

HENRIETTE. What has become of the brave Chevalier who always said "I wish it" with stern lips and laughing eyes?

CASANOVA. You are right. [*Controls himself.*]

HENRIETTE [*rising and going to the steps in front of the window*]. That mountain over there—it is the color of a fading rose. Is that mountain France?

CASANOVA. Yes. Are you thinking of France, Henriette?

HENRIETTE. The wind comes like a sigh from there. It is my home.

[*Enter* LEDUC. *He coughs.*]

CASANOVA. Did you deliver my letter?

LEDUC. Yes, master. [*He slips some coins into* CASANOVA'S *hands.*]

CASANOVA. Get me my coat, Leduc.

[LEDUC *goes into the bedroom.* HENRIETTE *makes as if to speak,* CASANOVA *looks questioningly at her.*]

HENRIETTE. Come—just as we were in Cesena, the morning that we met. [*She leads him to the window.*]

Do you remember what you said? You asked me if I would accompany you. [*He impulsively kisses her hand, his heart breaking as he realizes what is coming.*] Now the rôles are changed. [*She raises his face, so she can look into his eyes.*] Dear Chevalier, my love, am I to accompany you for the rest of your life? [*He is silent.*] You must answer as I had to answer at Cesena. Yes or No. Either I remain with you forever or I tell Cousin Antoine that I shall do whatever my family bids me. [*He is still silent.*] My fate is in your hands. Answer me!

CASANOVA. Henriette!

HENRIETTE. You do not answer my question. That can only mean goodbye.

CASANOVA. I love you.

HENRIETTE. What kind of love is it that lets you part from me, that puts your comfort before everything else!

CASANOVA [*coming to her and placing his arms around her*]. Not my comfort, Henriette,—not mine. Oh, it's true that when we met I felt but little love. Your beauty, the sound of your magic voice—they were enough. But these months we have been together, my love for you, my need of you has filled every corner of my being.

HENRIETTE. And still you do not answer my question.

CASANOVA. My fate lies in that gaming room below. Give me an hour.

HENRIETTE. What can one accomplish in so little time?

CASANOVA. One may lose the world, or keep it. [LEDUC

returns with CASANOVA's *coat.*] My coat, Leduc. [LEDUC *helps* CASANOVA *off with his dressing gown and into his coat.* LEDUC *exits with the dressing gown.* CASANOVA *turns at the door imploringly*]. You won't leave?

[*She shakes her head.* CASANOVA *goes out.* LEDUC *returns from the bedroom.*]

HENRIETTE. The gentleman who brought this letter—he is waiting below?

LEDUC. Yes, Madame.

HENRIETTE. Ask him to come here, please.

[LEDUC *exits to return in a moment with* ANTOINE.]

LEDUC [*announcing*]. Monsieur Antoine!

ANTOINE. So I have really found you. [*He goes to* HENRIETTE *and takes both her hands. She bows and he kisses her forehead.*]

HENRIETTE. Well, Cousin Antoine.

ANTOINE. I heard of you in Parma. After that for a time I lost trace of you. [*He looks about the room.*] Is there danger of our being interrupted?

HENRIETTE. You would prefer not to meet Casanova?

ANTOINE. Such a meeting would hardly be pleasant. After all, I am your relative by blood. [*His indignation coming to the surface.*] Henriette, your conduct has been beyond our comprehension.

HENRIETTE. For instance?

ANTOINE. Leaving your husband as you did, taking flight with a captain old enough to be your grandfather.

HENRIETTE. But I left my husband because I preferred an uncertain fate to the life he had prepared for

me. More than that, dear Cousin, if you have come in his behalf your mission is in vain.

ANTOINE. He knows nothing of my visit here.

HENRIETTE. You are not pleading with me to return to him?

ANTOINE. No. Your family realizes such a hope is vain. [HENRIETTE *nods.*] But your present situation—living here like this—is something that is hard for us to bear. Your family wishes you to return to them.

HENRIETTE. Even after—this?

ANTOINE. They have forgiven you. Will you come?

HENRIETTE. I—don't—know.

ANTOINE. You must understand, Henriette, if you refuse us now the offer will never be renewed.

HENRIETTE. My family is very kind.

ANTOINE. Then you will come? My coach is at the door. You must decide at once.

HENRIETTE. Give me a week——

ANTOINE. I regret——

HENRIETTE. An hour——

ANTOINE. What can one accomplish in an hour?

HENRIETTE. One can lose the world—or keep it. [CASANOVA *enters. No need for him to tell that fortune has been again unkind. In a daze he lets* HENRIETTE *introduce him to* ANTOINE.] My cousin, Monsieur Antoine. The Chevalier de Seingalt.

[*The men bow stiffly.*]

ANTOINE. I shall await your answer below. [*He goes out.*]

HENRIETTE. My cousin has come to fetch me.

CASANOVA. I know.

HENRIETTE. If I go, I go—at once.

CASINOVA. Where will you go?

HENRIETTE. To my home. My family has forgiven me. [*Pause. She clasps her hands.*] If you wish me to remain you have but to say "Remain, Henriette," and I am yours forever.

[CASANOVA *stands by the harpsichord;* HENRIETTE *looks at him questioningly but he makes no sign.* LEDUC *enters.*]

LEDUC. Madame's carriage.

HENRIETTE. A carriage! [*Once more she looks at* CASANOVA. *And still he makes no sign.*] My traveling cloak, Leduc.

[LEDUC *goes into the bedroom.* HENRIETTE *walks slowly to the windows. She looks at* CASANOVA; *then a thought comes to her. Quickly she draws her solitaire from her finger and with it writes on the window pane.* CASANOVA, *hearing the scratch of the diamond on the glass, looks up.* HENRIETTE *comes down from the landing.* CASANOVA, *with a questioning look, steps up to the window and reads what she has written there.*]

CASANOVA. "You will forget Henriette also."

HENRIETTE. That is my consolation.

CASANOVA. No, I shall not forget you, Henriette.

HENRIETTE. And lest you do . . . [*He holds out his hand; she slips the ring on his finger.*]

[LEDUC *returns with her traveling cloak.*]

HENRIETTE. Thank you, Leduc. [*To* CASANOVA.] Well? [CASANOVA *raises his arms from his sides, then lets them fall helplessly.* HENRIETTE *crosses to the door.* CASANOVA *moves to follow her. She hears him and stops.*] God keep you. Forget me. Be young and happy always.

CASANOVA. Henri——

HENRIETTE [*at the door*]. You said?

CASANOVA. Only adieu.

[*Without a word she leaves.* CASANOVA *goes up to the window. The coach is heard to start; he cries out in agony. The sound of the coach dies away in the distance. Then, only beginning to realize his loss,* CASANOVA *leaves the window. His eyes fall on the embroidery* HENRIETTE *was working on, but a little while ago. He seizes it in his hand as if fearful this last reminder of* HENRIETTE *will disappear, too. And below it he sees a baby's cap. He drops the embroidery and picks up the cap—looking at it as if unable at first to grasp its significance. Then* LEDUC *enters from the hall.*]

LEDUC. Chevalier, the Abbe Bernis, the French Ambassador. [*Enter* DUBOIS *and* BERNIS. LEDUC *goes.*]

BERNIS. My dear Casanova.

CASANOVA. Bernis. And Monsieur Dubois. What brings you here?

BERNIS. You, Chevalier. You thought to give us the slip a few weeks ago in Cesena. But I am not so easily eluded.

CASANOVA [*making a pitifully unsuccessful attempt to*

appear at ease]. It was an important matter that took me from Cesena that morning.

BERNIS. So I understood. [*Looking about.*] It was Madame's beauty quite as much as your fame, that enabled us to trace you.

CASANOVA. It is kind of you to visit me after what occurred.

BERNIS. No kindness, dear Chevalier—merely my country's need.

CASANOVA. What has the need of France to do with me?

BERNIS. Are you still interested in finance, Chevalier?

CASANOVA [*scarcely hearing the question*]. Well, I——

BERNIS. His Majesty is in desperate straits for money. The debt of France is catastrophic.

DUBOIS. What *is* the debt of France?

BERNIS. No one knows exactly. But five millions we must have at once. Now, Casanova, I have long known your aptitude for finance. [CASANOVA *bows.*] Both Dubois and I believe you may devise a scheme whereby France can procure the five millions which she needs. The scheme you used in Venice—it was a State lottery, was it not?

CASANOVA [*anything for an answer*]. Yes, yes—a State lottery.

BERNIS. You hear, Dubois?

DUBOIS. The very thing, your Excellency!

BERNIS. A State lottery, on an extensive scale.

DUBOIS. Yes, your Excellency!

BERNIS [*to* CASANOVA]. If you will co-operate with me in a similar scheme for France, I shall place one of the lottery offices under your direction.

CASANOVA. An office, no! I want to travel—travel—gallop—never to stop.

BERNIS. But you lost just now at the gaming table.

CASANOVA. I know.

BERNIS. Six offices then. My offer is not to be spurned, Casanova. A fixed income of sixty thousand—sixty thousand at the very least—and with your participation in the prize drawing, it might amount to something like a hundred thousand. [CASANOVA *begins to listen.*] I think one hundred thousand should be a solid income. I wonder if your gifts have ever been so recognized before. You should welcome my proposition. I place the treasury of France in your hands.

CASANOVA. Yes—I— [*He begins to realize what the offer may mean. Perhaps it has not come too late.*]

BERNIS. And my answer? What do you say?

CASANOVA. That you are too generous. Only a madman could refuse you.

[*They shake hands.*]

BERNIS. To prove my faith in this project and in yourself— [*he takes money from* DUBOIS] I have brought with me two thousand louis, two hundred in gold and a draft for the balance. Will you accept them and bind our bargain. [CASANOVA *mechanically accepts the money.*] So then the thing's arranged?

CASANOVA. It seems to be.

BERNIS. To celebrate our bargain, won't you join us at the Venetian fête?

CASANOVA. I beg your Excellency to excuse me. This is an urgent affair. [*He madly jerks on the bell-cord.*] I must begin at once. [*No time now for amenities.*]

BERNIS. I am sorry, for with you at my side I should imagine myself indeed in Venice.

CASANOVA. Some other time, perhaps. [BERNIS *bows and goes, followed by* DUBOIS. CASANOVA *stands still for a moment, looking at the gold in his hand, then he rushes to the door and cries out wildly.*] Innkeeper! Innkeeper! Come here!

[*The* INNKEEPER *enters, breathless.*]

INNKEEPER. What is it?

CASANOVA. Send me my servant.

INNKEEPER. Your servant, he's gone.

CASANOVA. Gone!

INNKEEPER. Whether for good or only for a drink, I can't be sure.

CASANOVA. How many roads are there to France?

INNKEEPER [*aggressively*]. Is your Highness leaving us?

CASANOVA. Answer my question! How many roads lead to France from here?

INNKEEPER. Four roads, your Highness.

CASANOVA. Four! [*He whips his sword out of his scabbard.*] If you send me four postillions in four minutes you will have as many louis d'or. If you fail me I

swear on my eternal salvation, that I will kill you in cold blood.

INNKEEPER. Four horsemen in four minutes. As you wish, your Highness. The kitchen is full of them.

CASANOVA. Hurry, hurry.

INNKEEPER [*he goes out, calling*]. Giovanni!—Nicodemi!—Alphonse!—François!

[*After a moment the* FIRST POSTILLION *enters, booted and spurred.*]

FIRST POSTILLION. The Innkeeper told me——

CASANOVA. Is your horse ready?

FIRST POSTILLION. I can leave at once.

CASANOVA [*tossing him a louis*]. This is for you and you will have ten more if you do my bidding.

[*The* SECOND *and* THIRD POSTILLIONS *enter.*]

SECOND POSTILLION. The Innkeeper sent me——

THIRD POSTILLION. Monsieur——

FOURTH POSTILLION [*as he rushes on*]. The Innkeeper said——

CASANOVA. Listen to me. Four roads lead to France from here. Each one of you will take one of those roads. One of you will overtake a coach in which a young and very beautiful woman is riding on her way to France. The one who finds her will tell her that she is to return here, that I am waiting for her, that I command her to return. Should her coachman resist, cut the horses from their harness. Bring her back to me. Each one of you will have ten louis. The one who finds her will have twenty—thirty—a hundred louis.

[*The* First Postillion *runs off.*]

Fourth Postillion. What's the lady's name?

Casanova. Henriette.

[*The* First Postillion *disappears. The* Third *is going, but stops in doorway.*]

Second Postillion. Her other name?

Fourth Postillion. Yes.

Third Postillion. Her last name?

Casanova. Tell her that Casanova sent you, and she will come. [*The* Postillions *run off. Their voices and the clatter of hoofs on the stones of the courtyard pavement are heard.* Casanova *rushes to the window, and shouts down to them.*] Gallop, gallop like mad! If your horses founder I will pay twice their value, but bring her back to me! Bring her back!

[*The curtain cuts him off. When it rises again, the stage is much darker, for an hour has elapsed.* Casanova *still watching at the window, is discovered silhouetted against the faint light reflected from the lake. A table set for supper has been placed in the center of the room.* Leduc *enters. He has very evidently been drinking.*]

Leduc. I have been given to understand that Monsieur has been making inquiries——

Casanova. You drunken pig. I could cut your throat for this.

Leduc. Think of the carpet and do it in the courtyard.

Casanova. You've neither shame nor loyalty. You

are drunk when I most need you, drunk in the supreme moment of my life.

LEDUC. Another supreme moment. [*He looks around.*] I don't see her.

CASANOVA. You are impudent.

LEDUC. I thank you, for I recognize no higher compliment than that. "You are impudent!" What, after all, does impudence imply. That you eat well, dress well, and sleep promiscuously. Modesty goes afoot. Impudence rides in a carriage.

[*The* INNKEEPER *enters bearing plates.*]

INNKEEPER. I hope Monsieur will be satisfied. [*He looks about the room.*] We must have some candles here. [*To* LEDUC *who has let two plates fall on the table.*] Be careful, you fool.

LEDUC. Eh?

INNKEEPER. Those dishes cost money. [*He goes out.*]

LEDUC [*glaring after him*]. One of these days when I come here to play the lord, I shall repay you that bit of courtesy.

CASANOVA. Will you be a lord, too, Leduc?

LEDUC. Why not? A lord's a good thing to be. I do it well. I have been well taught. A little more impudence and I am as fit a lord as any.

CASANOVA. By what means, Leduc?

LEDUC [*hand on the hilt of an imaginary sword*]. By my wits, monsieur, and a suit like you wear. I shall pay my visits to ambassadors and call myself the Chevalier Leduc. And as for women—— [*A prodigious wink.*]

CASANOVA. Leduc!

LEDUC. Monsieur?

CASANOVA. Clean my traveling boots. We leave in the morning.

LEDUC. Yes, Monsieur. [*As if addressing an imaginary servant.*] Clean my boots. We leave in the morning. [*Muttering to himself, he leaves.*]

[CASANOVA *pours himself a glass of wine. The gallop of an approaching horse is heard.* CASANOVA goes to *window and looks out. The* FIRST POSTILLION *enters.*]

FIRST POSTILLION. Monsieur, Madame is here. There was no need of violence. Madame said she expected Monsieur would call her back.

CASANOVA. This for you! [*He gives gold to the* POSTILLION.] Where is she?

FIRST POSTILLION. Out here, my lord.

[*The* POSTILLION *opens door and goes, leaving* CASANOVA *in the opening. The* BEAUTIFUL GOVERNESS *enters. She wears a traveling cloak very like that of* HENRIETTE'S.]

CASANOVA. Henriette! [*He takes her in his arms.*] Henriette, my dear, good Henriette. Everything has changed. Now you are safe—really safe. I am rich. We shall never separate again for a moment. [*The* GOVERNESS *gasps and escapes from his arms.*] Henriette! Why do you run away? Don't you love me, Henriette?

GOVERNESS. Love you? I have never seen you before.

CASANOVA. But you are not—— [*The* INNKEEPER *and*

LEDUC *enter with lighted candles. The* GOVERNESS *throws back her hood, revealing her face to the astonished* CASANOVA. *She appears as a person distinctly of the lower classes.*] But you are not—Henriette.

GOVERNESS. I am Henriette, right enough, and I've known many a conceited man in my day but never one who thought himself irresistible even in the dark.

CASANOVA. Pardon me, Madame. You were the victim of a slight mistake. You are not the lady I was expecting.

GOVERNESS. What! You weren't expecting me? Look here—aren't you Monsieur Cavanosa?

CASANOVA. Madame, I regret more than I can say that I never heard of his existence until this moment, or for that matter, of your own. However, since good fortune gives opportunity to admire your beauty, I presume to ask who you are. I am Casanova, the Chevalier de Seingalt. [*He bows.*]

GOVERNESS [*curtseying*]. I see no reason why you shouldn't know who I am. My name is Henriette. [*Curtsey*] and I came to Geneva to take a place as governess in the household of Monsieur Cavanosa, an elderly gentleman.

CASANOVA. Alas, Madame, I am neither elderly nor particularly gentle, and I have at present neither household nor any need for a governess.

GOVERNESS. For just a moment I thought you might have been Monsieur Cavanosa, but [*admiringly she moves nearer*] no one could mistake you for an old gentleman,

not even in the dark. [*He bows.*] And the way you carried on when I came in! Oh! [*She snickers.*] He was to meet me at this inn. We had an accident to the coach. La! I thought I was dead surely and when I arrived, Monsieur Cavanosa had already left for his villa. Then the postillion told me you were waiting for me.

CASANOVA. I should regret the error with far deeper penitence, Madame, if you were less beautiful.

GOVERNESS. Monsieur!

CASANOVA. Your eyes, and particularly your mouth, remind me very much of someone.

GOVERNESS. Of someone you love very much?

[*The* INNKEEPER *enters with supper on a tray, followed by* LEDUC *who takes up his place behind* CASANOVA'S *chair.* LEDUC *puts his hand on his heart and leers at the* GOVERNESS. *Frightened, she turns from him.* CASANOVA, *seeing that she is annoyed, makes a peremptory gesture to* LEDUC *to go about his business. He exits.*] I must be going.

CASANOVA. Surely not so soon?

GOVERNESS. Well, at the latest— [*with a smile*] to-morrow.

INNKEEPER [*who has placed two plates of soup on the table*]. Madame, the soup will grow cold.

CASANOVA. Before to-morrow—very cold.

GOVERNESS. Why, is this for me? O, thank you. I thought, of course, it was ordered for someone else.

CASANOVA [*behind table*]. I daresay you did.

GOVERNESS. It's charming of you, really. My dear, I am so hungry I can barely stand.

CASANOVA. Then sit. [*He removes her cloak and places her chair for her.*]

GOVERNESS. A woman alone doesn't dare to dine in these inns. I haven't had a bite since morning. [*She starts to eat at a terrific rate.*]

CASANOVA. Well, I am hungry myself. Your eyes and your mouth—You know it's quite astonishing!

GOVERNESS. How strange life is.

CASANOVA. Yes.

GOVERNESS. Whoever would have thought of us eating here this way?

CASANOVA [*pouring a glass of wine*]. I should have believed anything possible to-night except [he gives *her the wine which she drinks at once*] that I should be dining with so lovely a creature as yourself, dear lady.

GOVERNESS. You like my eyes and mouth? What else?

CASANOVA. I said that your eyes and mouth remind me of someone. That is the past. You are the present. Do I see your beauty in the future? Ah, that lovely mysterious future. [*He pours another glass of wine for her.*]

GOVERNESS. Thank you.

CASANOVA. Your health, beautiful Henriette.

GOVERNESS. And yours. [*As he pours more wine into her glass.*] No more for me. Wine goes too easily to my head. I am not used to it.

CASANOVA [*as he looks at the glass of wine which he holds up to the light*]. How beautiful.

GOVERNESS [*sipping her wine*]. You know, it does seem to me that everything is rather extraordinary.

CASANOVA. Your presence here the most extraordinary of all. I wonder if some charitable and unknown power willed that you should come back and be near me, make me ridiculous, bring me this parody of what I cast aside so ruthlessly.

GOVERNESS. If you ask me, I don't call that quite polite of you. You have some other woman on your mind. I know you have.

CASANOVA. Oh no. I am thinking of none but my beautiful Henriette. Yes, of course. [*Again the sound of hoof beats in the courtyard.* CASANOVA *turns quickly to* GOVERNESS.] Please now, dear Henriette, into the next room for just a moment. This way, quickly. [*He almost pushes her into the bedroom. The* SECOND POSTILLION *enters carrying the* DANCER *from Milan in his arms. She is kicking furiously.*] Well?

SECOND POSTILLION. Here we are.

CASANOVA [*looking at her*]. O!

DANCER [*in a furious temper*]. Well—what explanation is it this time? You order the harness cut from my horses. You have me dragged here across a postillion's saddle and now you look at me as though you had never seen me.

CASANOVA. Who are you?

DANCER. So. You pretend not to remember Henriette, who danced for you in Milan. [*She strikes a pose.*]

CASANOVA. Yes, I remember now.

SECOND POSTILLION. Monsieur.

CASANOVA [*giving him gold.*] Here, take this and get out. [SECOND POSTILLION *exits.*] You danced at La Scala, did you not?

DANCER. There, that's better. Now tell me what the devil you mean by this performance.

CASANOVA. It would be too long a story. Later—— [*She impatiently turns away from him. As she turns he catches a glimpse of her ankles.*] Her ankles!

DANCER. You always liked my ankles. It's a good thing for me I don't come apart, or I am sure you would have only sent for my legs. [*She drops into a chair by the table, sticking her legs out straight before her.*]

CASANOVA. Her feet. Dear, exquisite little feet, you alone have come back to me. What has become of the rest of you?

DANCER. *Ah!* Now we're getting on. [*She helps herself to glass of wine.*] I began to think that fool of a postillion had made a mistake. How did you know I was on my way to Paris?

CASANOVA. By chance I heard.

DANCER. I thought your man was a brigand holding me up. Then he said the Chevalier de Seingalt wants you to come to him, and I said, how like the rascal, he would do such a thing. And I said something else, too.

CASANOVA. What else?

DANCER. I said—Well it's high time after two whole years.

CASANOVA [*he starts to embrace her but she springs to her feet and moves away. The doors open and the* INNKEEPER *enters with dish*]. My dear, I still adore you. I really do.

DANCER. God knows what my manager will say. I have a brilliant engagement at the Paris Opera, you know. [*The* INNKEEPER *places a dish on the table.*] Casanova and a delicious supper—how well they go together! [*She sits at the table. The* GOVERNESS *knocks on the door of the bedroom.*]

CASANOVA [*to the* INNKEEPER]. I—I think you had better set another place. [*The* DANCER *looks up inquiringly. The* INNKEEPER *brings plates.*] For a dear, delicious creature from the country, a cousin of mine. You don't mind her supping with us?

DANCER [*archly*]. Not in the least unless she is more beautiful than I am.

CASANOVA [*he kisses her then goes up to bedroom door, and opens it. The* GOVERNESS *enters. He whispers to her*]. A cousin of mine from the country. [*He leads her to a chair at the other end of the table.*] The etiquette of court, dear ladies, forbids introductions. [CASANOVA *fills their glasses.*]

GOVERNESS. This is my third glass, you know.

CASANOVA [*to the* DANCER]. Then you must drink two at once.

DANCER [*as she takes the glasses*]. Voila, dear Chevalier.

CASANOVA. Now that the violins are attuned the concert may as well commence. [*He turns to the* GOVERNESS.] And you sweet cousin——

GOVERNESS [*laughing*]. Ah. He calls me cousin. [CASANOVA *drags the* GOVERNESS' *chair close to his own and kisses her.*] None of that now.

DANCER. Oho! What convent has your little cousin escaped from? Come on! We'll show her now. [*She leans forward and* CASANOVA *kisses her. The* GOVERNESS *feeling that she is being left out of it draws him to her and he kisses her. The* THIRD POSTILLION *enters.*]

THIRD POSTILLION. Monsieur, I have brought Madame.

[CASANOVA *jumps up. Brazen, flaunting, in a magnificent dress of scarlet and gold, the* COURTESAN *enters. She measures* CASANOVA *and the two women at a glance.*]

COURTESAN. Well, what now?

[CASANOVA *gives the* POSTILLION *his money.*]

THIRD POSTILLION. Thank you, Monsieur. [*He exits.*]

COURTESAN. So—it's a party of four? Well, I can't say that surprises me. I have been hearing about you for a long time, my friend. There is just one thing, though. I take my pay in advance. [*She holds out her hand for money.* CASANOVA *gives her a handful of gold and with his eyes consumes her from head to foot.*]

CASANOVA. Her body, her body to the life.

COURTESAN [*testing the gold in her teeth*]. Your body while this lasts. Shall I undress?

[*The* GOVERNESS *is visibly shocked; even the* DANCER *is a little taken aback.*]

CASANOVA. Not yet, I think. [*Enter the* INNKEEPER. *He stands in the door and watches.*] With your gracious permission, ladies, we add another instrument to our orchestra—an instrument on which masters have played.

[*Now from the barges comes the music of a minuet.*]

COURTESAN. Impertinent!

CASANOVA. It is a compliment, Madame.

COURTESAN. Oh is it? In that case, I thank you. I have my money. I can't complain. [*She sits at the table.*]

INNKEEPER. Still another place?

COURTESAN. Never mind the food—a glass of wine. [CASANOVA *fills her glass; she raises it.*] To love!

CASANOVA [*sneeringly*]. And lust!

COURTESAN. And all such things.

[*They clink glasses. The minuet becomes louder.*]

DANCER. Bravo! A minuet! Come, Chevalier, and dance with me.

COURTESAN. Bravo! [*She seizes the* INNKEEPER.] Here's my partner.

INNKEEPER. Madame, I am afflicted with the gout.

DANCER. Make him dance!

[CASANOVA *picks up his sword from the harpsichord.*]

COURTESAN. Come on now, Goutie.

INNKEEPER. Madame, thank you for the honor.

DANCER. Come, now, no excuse. [*As the* COURTESAN *dances with the* INNKEEPER.] One, two . . .

INNKEEPER. In God's name, Monsieur.

[*The dance continues.*]

COURTESAN. Pouf! It's hot!

DANCER. Bravo.

INNKEEPER. I am a married man.

COURTESAN. Don't you want a kiss?

INNKEEPER. I am the father of a family.

COURTESAN. O well, if you don't want one——

INNKEEPER. I wouldn't say that—— [*Forgetting his family he attempts to kiss her. She seizes him by the ear and swings him away from her.*]

COURTESAN. Get out, old clubfoot!

[*The* INNKEEPER *escapes somehow. Meanwhile* CASANOVA, *sickening of the revelry, has withdrawn to the window where he stands with his head pressed against the pane. The* COURTESAN *comes up and touches him on the shoulder. He turns.*] Oh, look. What is that on your forehead. [*He puts his hand to his forehead.*] Don't touch it. Come look. [*She turns and snatches up a candelabra.*] There is writing on his forehead. It's written backwards. "Henriette." My name.

CASANOVA. I had a headache. The window-pane was cool.

COURTESAN [*reading from the window-pane.*] "You will forget Henriette, also."

THE DANCER. Henriette. That is my name.

GOVERNESS. My name.

CASANOVA. You read in my forehead what is burnt in my heart. Henriette—my love—my love forever!

[*They come into his arms.*] If I could but melt you all three in the fire of my veins and then, like some colossal sculptor mold you anew into a single woman! Her hair, eyes, face, lips—but you wouldn't be enough. I should need a hundred, a thousand more like you. [*He casts them from him.*] I should send a thousand more postillions a-gallop over a thousand roads and one would bring me back her throat and one her arms—and one her silver voice—and one the smile she had. And even then I should not have her soul that I have lost forever. If I were God . . .

THE THREE WOMEN [*as they draw away from him*]. Oh!

[THE FOURTH POSTILLION *staggers in and stands panting by the door.* CASANOVA *goes to him, and looks first at him, then out into the corridor. But there is no one there. He turns and seizes the* POSTILLION *by the throat.*]

CASANOVA. Where is she?

FOURTH POSTILLION [*quickly, between gasps*]. I saw a coach—it had crossed the frontier—I had no passports—I couldn't follow.

CASANOVA. Ah! [CASANOVA *throws the* POSTILLION *to the floor and staggers over to a chair.*]

FOURTH POSTILLION. Monsieur— [*He slowly picks himself up.*] My horse foundered—and you promised—

CASANOVA [*hurling gold madly at the* POSTILLION *while the women gasp*]. There will be gold always, and gold forever. But the roads to France are ridden, and I am left alone.

CURTAIN

ACT III

SCENE: *The scene is the same as in the last Act except that the place has quite evidently come upon evil days. The gold furniture is dulled, the walls are faded and the flowers in the petit point have lost their color. Otherwise, except that the harpsichord and sewing basket and the vases of flowers have been taken away, the room is unchanged.*

ROSE *and* MANON, *charming young creatures of fifteen or sixteen, are discovered looking out of the windows. The* INNKEEPER *enters. He is the same man whom we knew in the last act, a score of years older, with white hair and spectacles. He looks around the room distressed and shakes his head. Then he hears the laughter of* ROSE *and* MANON *at the window.*

INNKEEPER. You seem in high spirits. I need such spirits in the kitchen. We must use our best china and silver to-night and I don't want anyone but you to touch them.

MANON [*followed by* ROSE, MANON *excitedly runs to him*]. Oh, has a great lord arrived?

INNKEEPER. I should say he has! He gave a gold piece to Philip for helping him from his carriage.

ROSE. A gold piece!

MANON. Is he young?

ROSE. Where does he come from?

MANON. Is he French?

ROSE. Is he alone?

MANON. Is he married?

INNKEEPER [*his hands to his ears*]. Get down to the kitchen and remember those dishes cost money. [*He goes up to the buffet. The two girls put their fingers to their lips and run up to this window.* MANON *looks back to see whether the* INNKEEPER *is watching. They look out again.*]

MANON. Ooh! What a coach!

ROSE. I don't believe the King of France has so much gold on his.

MANON. Puss-in-Boots had such a coach. [*She whispers something in* ROSE's *ear. They laugh, and we regret that young girls should be thinking of such things. The* INNKEEPER *hears them and turns.*]

INNKEEPER. Well! Have I got to attend to the silver and china myself?

MANON. We're going.

[*Both girls run toward the door.*]

ROSE. We's going.

INNKEEPER. You're so lightheaded you will only break things. [*He turns to the buffet again.*]

ROSE. Just suppose that coach had come to whisk us off to the King's palace.

MANON. Why not? Mademoiselle Roman went and she is not so much.

INNKEEPER. Yes, I imagine the King must be pining away for you two. [*He comes between them.*] Get down to the kitchen and stop your nonsense!

MANON. Always the kitchen! Do you think it is amusing in the kitchen, Uncle.

INNKEEPER. Bah!

ROSE. You've forgotten what it is to be young.

INNKEEPER. Oh, have I?

MANON. You have had plenty of time to forget it.

INNKEEPER. Oh, it isn't so very long ago. It's only a little over twenty years and in this very room. But that is no story for nice young girls.

MANON. Oh, uncle, do tell us!

ROSE. Please, please!

INNKEEPER. There was a great revel in this room some twenty years ago. The three most beautiful women you ever saw, and your Uncle, my dears. And the most beautiful, the noblest of them all insisted on dancing with me. [*He does a reminiscent step or two.*] I was young then, I had a way with me. I gazed into her eyes—She gazed into mine—She couldn't resist me. For right then and there, with her lover in the room, she threw herself into my arms. And then——

BOTH GIRLS. And then——?

INNKEEPER. The rest of the story is not for children's ears.

MANON. Quite right, Uncle, you mustn't tell us what happened after that.

ROSE. We can guess. [*Both laugh.*] Uncle, when

you danced with that noble woman, did you wear spectacles?

INNKEEPER. The young can never believe that the old have been young in their day. Get down to the kitchen and build the fire. I have no time to chatter with a great nobleman in the house.

[*He claps his hands.* MANON *and* ROSE, *giggling mischievously, escape. Just as they go the door left opens and* CASANOVA *enters. By his walk—he leans upon an ebony stick—we see that he has been ill. His face is wasted and there is a suspicion of feebleness in his speech. But his smile is still ready and his ways are still bright for all the threadbareness of his coat and the fullness of his gold lace. He joins in the laughter of the two young girls. Then he sees the* INNKEEPER, *senses the contempt of his manner and frowns.*]

CASANOVA [*as he sits at the table*]. I feel like the devil. That fish you gave me for lunch has left me with indigestion. I shall have to go to the kitchen myself and watch your cook if I don't want to be poisoned.

INNKEEPER. Oh, come now.

CASANOVA. Yes, I sometimes think you would like to see me die in this hole.

INNKEEPER. You've been living in this hole for three weeks, and I have yet to see the color of your money. If you don't like my house the sooner you get out, the better.

CASANOVA. Whatever I think of your house, I don't

like your tone at all. Do you know who you're talking to?

INNKEEPER. Eh!

CASANOVA. I'm the Chevalier de Seingalt, who snubbed the King of Prussia because he had a stupid face; who quarreled three days on end with Voltaire; who had three hundred mistresses and all of them beautiful! who has felt in his old veins fire enough to stir the ghosts of all the youths of ancient Rome. Oh, my friend, my ironical friend, this body has been enveloped in such glories of passion that, did it retain a single spark, it would shine with a splendor that would blind you. Remember that, my friend, when you are tempted to impertinence.

INNKEEPER. Here, here, don't get excited. Didn't the doctor tell you to be careful. It is bad for you to work yourself up.

CASANOVA. Address me as Chevalier. I am Casanova, Chevalier de Seingalt.

INNKEEPER. Casanova! [*Searching in his memory.*] Chevalier de Seingalt. Why, twenty years ago the old French Ambassador Bernis came here. And there was a man of that name—— [*He leans over the table and peers at him.*] No, it is impossible!

CASANOVA. No one would recognize me now.

INNKEEPER. You! [CASANOVA *nods.*] And there was a woman too. A beauty—— [*Looks at door to the room which was* HENRIETTE'S.]

CASANOVA. Ah!

INNKEEPER. Yes, and the servant, a rascal named Leduc.

CASANOVA. Don't speak of him!

INNKEEPER. Where is he now?

CASANOVA. Two years ago he ran away with everything I had. It doesn't matter. I am leaving here to-morrow. I shall put my traveling boots out. See to it that they are cleaned this evening.

INNKEEPER. I shall tell one of the boys. And the Chevalier really leaves to-morrow?

CASANOVA. Much to your joy—yes!

INNKEEPER. Then with the Chevalier's permission, I will present His Highness with a little bill. [*He produces it from his pocket.*]

CASANOVA [*the old manner returning for the emergency*]. Of course. The manager of my estates is a bit late. I haven't yet received my last quarter's rents.

INNKEEPER. Small wonder. The moon is far away.

CASANOVA [*ignoring the irony*]. I will attend to it in the morning.

INNKEEPER. But the Chevalier's bill is more than 300 francs.

CASANOVA. Three hundred francs! Why since I have been ill, I have scarcely touched a thing.

INNKEEPER. Forgive me for reminding your Highness that we have waited upon him every day.

CASANOVA [*takes from his finger the only ring which he wears*]. Get what you can for the ring. But above all, remember the boots.

INNKEEPER. Yes, but my bill—— [*He starts to protest, but* CASANOVA *looks him down.*] As your Highness pleases. [*He is going.*]

CASANOVA. Wait! [*The* INNKEEPER *stops.*] There is something I want to ask you. During my illness I seem to remember someone at my bedside, someone who sat beside me—a woman. Who was she?

INNKEEPER. Perhaps one of my two nieces who have just come to live with me. They did look after you from time to time.

CASANOVA. No—it was another woman.

INNKEEPER [*evidently lying*]. No other that I know of.

CASANOVA. Yes, another. It must have been the fever, but there were moments when I seemed to see two of them quite alike and I had a feeling—— [*He looks at the* INNKEEPER, *who is listening, then makes a scornful gesture of dismissal.*] Don't forget my boots.

INNKEEPER. I shall remember, Chevalier, but you must excuse me. I have a most distinguished guest downstairs.

CASANOVA. What's his name?

INNKEEPER. A grandee of Spain. And his name is Maria Jose Garcia Lopez y Martinez, the Marquis di Valdepinas y Torrentes. [CASANOVA *grunts.*] He told me as many names again, but I have forgotten them. He gave the boy a gold piece simply for helping him out of his coach. [*The* INNKEEPER *exits.*]

CASANOVA [*taking out his empty purse and tossing it*

on to the table]. A gold piece to the boy; hm! [*He stands alone by the window against the twilight sky.* ROSE, *carrying two candles, enters. One she places on the buffet at the side, the other on the table in the center. Then she sits by the table and picks up a polished silver-spoon, surveying her reflection in it.* CASANOVA, *rejuvenated, creeps up lightly and covers her eyes with his hands. She screams.*]

ROSE. Oh! how you frightened me! My heart! [*She frees herself from him.*]

CASANOVA. Poor little dear. Just like a frightened pigeon!

ROSE [*pouting*]. It isn't nice of you to frighten me so.

CASANOVA. Are you cross with me? I don't know. I think you are. Your manner shows it.

ROSE. No, don't. Leave me alone. I am angry.

CASANOVA. Really angry.

ROSE [*moving away from him*]. Not at this distance.

MANON [*running in excitedly*]. Oh, Rose, the kitchen is full of smoke and Uncle is furious!

ROSE. I told you not to put that wet log on.

MANON. You always blame everything on me.

CASANOVA. She is a bad girl. She has just refused to let me kiss her.

MANON. She didn't refuse because she is bad, Monsieur, but because she does not understand the ways of the world. She doesn't know that much. [*Measures* ROSE'S *knowledge with the tip of her finger.*]

ROSE. That is not true.

MANON. It is. Why you are afraid of anything!

CASANOVA. Suppose I had asked you?

MANON. I am no country duckling. I was meant for something better than the kitchen.

CASANOVA. You were indeed, my dear.

[*She offers her lips to him; he takes her in his arms and kisses her.*]

MANON [*defiantly to* ROSE]. Another if you like. [*Another kiss.*] And as many more as you wish whenever you ask for them.

CASANOVA [*to* ROSE]. You see, it isn't so very difficult and it is very good.

MANON. She'd never dare.

ROSE. I would, too! [*She places herself boldly in front of* CASANOVA, *lowering her eyes and offering her cheek.*]

MANON. She is only doing it to spite me.

[*Just as* CASANOVA *comes to kiss her,* ROSE *gives a frightened cry and jumps away.*]

ROSE. Oh, I hear Uncle's coming.

MANON. You see, she simply does not dare!

[*Rose sticks her tongue out.* CASANOVA *throws himself laughingly into a chair. He draws them both to him; they kneel on either side.*]

CASANOVA. Ah, but Rose is right. A little innocent kiss, even in play. Oh, but Uncle would be angry if he knew. Best wait until to-night after supper is over and everything is put away and Uncle is gone to bed. Then

you come here on tip-toe, both of you. We shall see then which of you is the most courageous.

MANON. You may count on me.

ROSE. I shall be here before you.

MANON. Oh, la la!

ROSE. Just wait and see.

CASANOVA. Then you will both come after supper.

[MANON *and* ROSE *laugh. Now from the lake comes the faint music of an orchestra.*]

MANON [*running to the window*]. Oh, the carnival has begun already.

CASANOVA. Do they still make merry here?

ROSE. How beautiful it is! The lake is so lovely with all the lighted barges.

MANON [*at the window too*]. Is this the way you clean windows? Of course it is easy to criticize me for that wet log, but just you look at this window!

ROSE. It isn't my place to clean it.

MANON. Why, what's that?

ROSE. It isn't dirt, it's something scratched on the pane.

MANON. You are right. Someone has written: [*She reads.*] "You will forget Henriette also."

ROSE. Who in the world could have written that?

MANON. Chevalier, have you seen it? Come and look. Someone has scratched on the window pane, "You will forget Henriette also." How stupid to write such things on a window pane.

CASANOVA. Quite right. Such things should be only written in the sand where they will be washed away.

[*The* INNKEEPER *enters with a candelabra.*]

INNKEEPER. Which one of you built that fire? Do you think my guests want to be smoked out? Get out of here, both of you, and keep out of my sight. [MANON *and* ROSE *flee through the door.* CASANOVA *is going to window, but the* INNKEEPER *stops him.*] You must excuse me, Chevalier, but the rooms downstairs are filled with smoke, and the one I am preparing for my noble guest is not yet ready. Perhaps you will be good enough to dine——

CASANOVA. Do you propose that I give up my room to a stranger?

INNKEEPER. But the Chevalier has been dining in his bedroom.

CASANOVA. It is good of you not to send me to the kitchen. Serve my dinner here, at once. If you have no other room for this impressive grandee of yours, you may lay his place opposite mine.

INNKEEPER [*muttering while he places another chair at the table*]. I don't know what he will say to that. This beggar will be the ruin of me.

[*The* INNKEEPER *exits.* CASANOVA *pours out a glass of wine, sips it and makes a grimace of distaste. The* INNKEEPER *re-enters.*]

INNKEEPER [*unctuously*]. If your Excellency will enter—Chevalier, the Marquis. I pray your Excellency to forgive me, but it is only for to-night.

[CASANOVA, *in his most regal days, was a sombre figure compared to the Marquis who now enters. His coat is white with great splotches of lurid color. Beyond that one's eyes cannot stray except to the dainty sable muff which he carries on his arm. But after taking in the splendor of his raiment we see that the Marquis is none other than* LEDUC, *but a Leduc more imperial than Cæsar himself.* CASANOVA *does not rise from his seat; he only scrutinizes* LEDUC *through his quizzing glass*].

INNKEEPER. If I had known in time——

LEDUC [*with sublime condescension*]. You needn't concern yourself, my good fellow. I arrived in-cong-wee-to without advising you. I must take pot luck. [*Confidently.*] Is this the person not in the best of circumstances? Oh, a nobleman—I'll speak with him. [*The* INNKEEPER *backs out bowing.*] It is good of you to grant me the hospitality of your table. I am just passing through towards Italy. [*As he is about to sit he recognizes* CASANOVA.] Merciful Mother! [*Fumbles with his hat, and drops it.*]

CASANOVA. Leduc!

LEDUC. Monsieur!

CASANOVA. Clean my traveling boots—we leave in the morning. You will find them in there beside the bed. [CASANOVA *picks up his wine glass.* LEDUC *starts to door and turns.* CASANOVA *points again.* LEDUC *goes.* CASANOVA *puts the wine away from him with a gesture of disgust.*] Garbage. [*Re-enter* LEDUC *with the boots.*] That's right. Look inside one of them for the blacking.

LEDUC. To be sure my own fortunes aren't very brilliant—To-morrow I'll sell my coach. I only hired it yesterday. Since you haven't a penny and the sale of the coach should net at least a thousand louis, I thought that together we might start a faro table.

CASANOVA. Have you found it?

LEDUC. What?

CASANOVA. The blacking. [LEDUC *plunges his hand into the boot and brings out the blacking. Then he picks up the boots and begins to polish. The* INNKEEPER *enters with soup, and serves a plate of it to* CASANOVA.] This soup is so much garbage. Take it away. [*The* INNKEEPER *makes an indignant exclamation.*] I know your cook is trying to poison me and no one but you would have the impudence to seat my servant at my table.

INNKEEPER. Your servant?

CASANOVA. When he is finished cleaning my boots, give him— [*pointing with his stick*] his dinner in the kitchen.

INNKEEPER [*on turning and seeing* LEDUC, *he is speechless for a moment*]. Excellency, forgive me. If your Excellency really insists upon going, he can send me the very small sum he owes at his convenience. [*Gives back the ring.*] If I had only known!

CASANOVA. Now you know. Take this trash away. Bring me some ham and a bit of cheese. The sight of this ruined what little appetite I had.

INNKEEPER. Forgive me, Your Excellency. The kitchen is so full of smoke that everything is spoiled.

[*The* INNKEEPER *exits.* LEDUC *sighs prodigiously.*]

CASANOVA. Be careful, Leduc, you will blow out the candle.

LEDUC. Forgive me but I couldn't hold it back. It was a sigh of relief because God knows in these two years of playing the Lord this is my first happy moment. Here is peace at last.

CASANOVA. That was well said, Leduc. You have learned wisdom. To-morrow by post-chaise we will try Italy again—Italy or Bohemia, perhaps. What does it matter? [LEDUC *rises. The gorgeous coat glows in the candle light.*] Leduc!

LEDUC. Monsieur.

CASANOVA. Take off my coat, you may soil it. [LEDUC *takes the boots, brush and blacking and carries them into the other room. The* INNKEEPER *appears bringing the ham very ceremoniously this time.* LEDUC *returns in his shirt sleeves and places himself at attention behind his master's chair.* CASANOVA *eats listlessly.*] I see you haven't forgotten.

LEDUC. It was so hard for me to forget, Master, that when I hired my coach I got up behind.

[CASANOVA *finishes eating, rises and wanders idly over to the window, only to pause.* LEDUC *finally exits with candelabra.*]

CASANOVA [*reading slowly from the window-pane*]. "You will forget Henriette also."

[*Music swells out on the lake and fireworks flash across the sky. The door on the right opens and* HENRIETTE, *clad girlishly in white, a straw hat hanging from her arm*

by a ribbon, comes furtively in. CASANOVA *sees her and cannot believe his eyes. He puts his hand to his face and touches his arms as though to convince himself that he is not dreaming. His sigh is like that of a man awakening from a nightmare. He goes slowly toward her. The moonlight flooding in through the window makes* HENRIETTE *look as much a phantom to us as to him. She bows deeply with the silent grace of a phantom.* CASANOVA, *returning the bow, catches the candelabra up from the table. The light of the candles does not destroy the vision.*]

HENRIETTE. Will you think me bold, Chevalier? I wanted so much to see you once more.

CASANOVA. Henriette!

HENRIETTE. You know my name.

CASANOVA. Can it be——?

HENRIETTE. I didn't mean to trouble you but I'm leaving and I wanted to make sure that you were better. You are better, aren't you?

CASANOVA. Then it was not the fever. Then it was your face that bent over me and it was your soft hands that soothed my burning forehead. How is it possible? Oh, I'm dreaming.

HENRIETTE. It was the least we could do for any one as noble and chivalrous and good as you.

CASANOVA [*staring at the miniature which she wears about her neck*]. Then it is no dream. This is the same portrait that I saw more than twenty years ago. In Italy, at Cesena, more than twenty years ago.

HENRIETTE. Oh, that's not possible. The artist only finished it last week. It was my birthday present.

CASANOVA. Tell me—this old lady, who is she?

HENRIETTE. My mother. You see, she has had so much sorrow and trouble that she looks older than she really is.

CASANOVA. So that is your mother. And you are going away, you said?

HENRIETTE. Yes, to-night.

CASANOVA. It's very dangerous to travel at night.

HENRIETTE. We always travel at night. Mother's eyes are so weak; she has cried so much. The glare of the white road is bad for her eyes. The carriage is waiting at the door now. I only came so that—I don't know —to say good-by. I must go now. Good-by. [*She curtsies and starts toward the door.*]

CASANOVA. Henriette! A moment, please! [HENRIETTE *pauses.*] You look so much like some one I used to know. May I call you Henriette?

HENRIETTE. Mother has talked of you so much and has told me such beautiful things about you, that without knowing you I have loved you as though you were my father. [CASANOVA *turns away sharply.*] What is it?

CASANOVA. It's nothing. You say your mother speaks of me?

HENRIETTE. Oh, yes. Once, while we were watching by your bedside she spoke for hours but very low, almost a whisper. It seemed as though she were talking to herself and not to me at all.

CASANOVA. Ah! And did you understand?

HENRIETTE. Yes. [*He looks at her.*] A little. You see, I am no longer a child. I was twenty-one yesterday.

CASANOVA. Twenty-one.

HENRIETTE. Every year on my birthday we make an excursion here.

CASANOVA [*softly*]. Twenty-one.

HENRIETTE. This time mother didn't want to stay. She has been unhappy; she hasn't left her room for days. She said: "Some one is here—I don't want him to see how I've changed."

CASANOVA. She has known so much sorrow?

HENRIETTE. My father died before I was born and mother, poor dear, knew very little about taking care of things. We're poor.

CASANOVA. Terribly poor?

HENRIETTE. Oh, no, it's not as bad as that. If only we didn't have to live in Paris. It's stifling inside those smoky walls—— That's why I was so sorry to give up the walk we planned for yesterday. I like to walk through the fields.

CASANOVA. You like to?

HENRIETTE. Yes, but I love the forest! The forest is the palace of the poor. Don't you like the country?

CASANOVA. The country?

HENRIETTE. And have you never known the joy of running through the fields at daybreak?

CASANOVA. I always arose too late.

HENRIETTE. And the lake—not with the rockets flashing across it—but in the quiet of the night when the sky is lit up with stars.

CASANOVA. I never thought to look up to them.

HENRIETTE. I must be going. Mother's waiting.

CASANOVA. Henriette, you just told me that yesterday was your birthday. May I give you a present? [*He takes a ring from his finger and beckons to her. She hesitates and then comes back. He slips it on her wedding-ring finger and kisses her hand.*]

HENRIETTE. Thank you.

[*A woman's voice is heard outside the window.*]

THE VOICE. Henriette!

HENRIETTE. That's mother. Shall I call her in?

CASANOVA. No, no.

HENRIETTE. But it's only mother. Please let me call her.

CASANOVA. I forbid it.

THE VOICE. Henriette—Henriette.

HENRIETTE [*running to the window*]. I am coming, mother.

THE VOICE. The carriage is ready. Come, come quickly.

HENRIETTE. That's mother.

CASANOVA [*puts his hands to his face and passes his fingers over the wrinkles as if he were discovering them for the first time. He groans*]. No—no.

HENRIETTE. I must be going. [*She moves towards*

the door.] I am going. [*At the door.*] Good-by. [*She curtsies and is about to go.*]

CASANOVA. Henriette!

HENRIETTE. You said?

CASANOVA. Adieu. [HENRIETTE *curtsies and goes out.*] My daughter, and I've nothing to give. [*He goes to the window and with his stick makes a swordsman's salute. He stands for a moment with his head pressed against the window pane. Then as the noise of the departing carriage dies away, he recoils from the window and smashes the glass with his stick.*] Oh, for a month, a week, a day of my youth! [*He comes slowly down, kneels and kisses the floor where his daughter has stood.*] My daughter! My daughter! The trace of her footprints. [*He falls over on his side.*]

[*There is a pause and then* MANON *and* ROSE *creep in.*]

ROSE. It's cold here!

MANON [*seeing* CASANOVA]. What's happened?

ROSE. I'm going back to bed.

MANON. He seemed so young this afternoon. Now he looks as though he were——

ROSE [*catching sight of* CASANOVA]. Come away, Manon. I'm afraid! [*Terrified.*] Uncle! Uncle! Uncle!

MANON [*sadly*]. Poor old man!

CURTAIN

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